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THE NATURE OF THE PROFESSIONS

A Sociological Analysis of Professional Power,  
Socialisation and Ideologies

by

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For BPhil degree

Sociology Discipline

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## ABSTRACT

### THE NATURE OF THE PROFESSIONS

#### A Sociological Analysis of Professional Power, Socialisation and Ideologies

This dissertation analyses professional power (both in society and within professional institutions), the nature of professional socialisation, and professional ideologies.

Although professions appear to have little real direct political power, they exert effective pressure on governments in areas of corporate concern and will act as pressure groups to maintain their quasi monopoly position and protect the status of their expertise. Professionals also exert influence over their clients, beyond that required for effective fulfilment of their occupational task, by their ability to define the nature of their services. Despite increasing bureaucratisation, professions are largely able to maintain their power through the deference granted to their expertise, and influence over the socialisation of their members.

Control over membership is the prerequisite for mobilising power. Professions control their members firstly by vetting their status, which nowadays is largely achieved by means of entrance qualifications and practical experience. Control over professionals is achieved partly by elite domination of positions in professional associations, and partly by peer group control. Conformity to professional values and practice is thereby obtained.

However, of all the means of internal control in professions, socialisation of the members is the most important in ensuring conformity to professional values. The individual learns to identify with the profession, and through investment of time and effort becomes committed to the profession and its culture. The concepts of identification, investment, commitment and professional culture are considered in detail to show the source of professional power and the nature of the professions generally.

Professional ideologies are seen as a key factor in explaining professional power and the nature of the professions. These ideologies are the resource of the profession, are internalised by the individual member, and bind him to the profession; they are also the face which the profession presents to society. Professional expertise itself is to a large extent ideological, and the power and prestige of a profession depend largely on the extent to which its ideology is accepted by society.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The quest undertaken here is to seek an answer to the question what is the meaning of professionalism in society, and to the individual professional? The nature of the professions is considered by examining both the internal and the external power of the professions, for it is by understanding its power relations that the essence of professionalism is revealed. Professions exercise their power with society's approval and when, as will be shown, this power is often greater than the apparent importance of their expertise, then perhaps professional and societal ideologies have to be considered in order to explain the difference. Crucial to the nature of professionalism is the socialisation process, for it is here that professional values are conferred and confirmed.

The emphasis here is on the professions in this country, although many of the examples have had to be American, since it is there that most of the research has been done. In addition, many of the illustrations come from the medical and legal professions, again because it is here that most of the research has been done.

In Chapter II I argue that professions may have little political power in the usual sense of the term and that we should speak rather of their influence on government, particularly on such matters as the drafting of legislation that affects them. Whilst it is shown that some power derives from the type of clients different professions have, this is relatively small. Instead, it is suggested that the professional person is performing not so much for the client as for fellow professionals, and that we should examine the power of professions in society



by identifying the status and influence of the strata in society from which a particular profession draws its members, not the status or otherwise of its clients. Although bureaucratisation is encroaching upon the power of professions, most professionals are able to maintain some independence. Professional expertise is social as well as technical, and thus somewhat immune from rational control; it cannot therefore be programmed away by bureaucratisation. In all, one could say that professional strength is the ability to exploit expertise to counter the control of other groups.

In examining the power of professions over their own members in Chapter III, it is shown that institutional control for most professions developed in a similar manner in the nineteenth century, from informal associations of professional gentlemen to formal institutions with rational certification and control procedures. Despite this formalisation of institutional control, status is still a relevant criterion for selection, and informal control is still important, for example in the form of peer group control and professional socialisation.

The question of professional socialisation is considered to be so important for an understanding of the meaning and influence of the professions that it merits a separate chapter. Here examples of socialisation are discussed which show how an individual identifies with, invests in, and finally becomes committed to a profession, so much so that the question 'who am I?' is answered in terms of the professional group which has become his community, his anchorage in society. Clearly here is a powerful weapon of professional control.

The chapter on professional ideology attempts to link the individual and societal aspects of professionalism, its micro and macro aspects, since it would seem that whilst a professional ideology provides a pers-

pective which enables the individual to interpret the meaning of his actions it is also the means by which the profession justifies its existence and advances its position in society. In this way I argue that professional ideology, built up by socialisation and peer group control, binds the individual to his profession. Yet it is also through this ideology that a profession defines itself, presents itself to the client, and the public at large, and finally through which it seeks societal approval, striving to get its values and definitions generally confirmed.

To understand professions in themselves is a useful exercise. But the analysis of professional power and of professional socialisation sheds light on some of the ways in which power is exercised generally. Thus the analysis in Chapter II of how professions act as pressure groups influencing government policy and altering proposed legislation behind the scenes is an interesting example of the use of power. Power, culture, ideology, socialisation are central themes in sociology. The task here has been to examine these themes in the context of the sociology of the professions.

## CHAPTER II

### THE POWER OF THE PROFESSIONS IN SOCIETY

In this chapter answers will be sought to the questions: what power do professions have in society, what sort of power is it, and what is its extent. Here the question will be sub-divided into the following topics: the political power of the professions, their power in relation to clients, the power of professional expertise, and the place of the professions in bureaucracies. The following chapter will deal with a separate aspect of professional power, their control over their own members, while the power of the professions to affect societal values will be considered in Chapter V, when professional ideologies are considered.

#### 1. POLITICAL POWER OF PROFESSIONS

The title is not meant to imply that professions and professional men seek to govern the country. Sometimes this may happen, for example, Smigel showing that becoming a successful Wall Street lawyer may lead to a post in the government. Instead, political power is seen as a means to an end. As W.J. Reader suggested, in the nineteenth century, professionals were interested in the material rewards of power rather than power itself:

'If the gentry wanted to hang on to political power, that in itself the middle class did not very much object to, but what did annoy them was find themselves shut out of the material rewards of power. They wanted some of the jobs for some of their boys, and they intended to break into the official world in the same way as they were breaking into the world of the professions which also the gentry had been inclined to regard as preserves of their own'. (1)

His comment is largely true today. Nor is this disinterest in political power incidental. Professions by their very nature exclude themselves from the centre of political power. Professional power and political power are distinct and separate, as Philip Elliott says:

'Characteristics of professional specialisation and authority are one reason for the fact that the professions, while they constitute an occupation elite in modern society have only limited access to and control over power'.

and he concludes:

'It is only a slight exaggeration to argue that a professional will come closer to centres of power and influence the more he relinquishes his specific professional functions'. (2)

It is perhaps influence over areas of corporate concern rather than political power as such which a profession seeks. Thus the emphasis here will be on what these areas of corporate concern are and how professions seek to safeguard their interests. In particular, the discussion in this section will concentrate on how professions seek to influence government, to consider for example the power of the professions as pressure groups, a subject which Harry Eckstein examines. (3) He asks what are the determinants of the form, intensity, scope and effectiveness of pressure groups? He shows how the power and organisation of the BMA grew as it was faced with the growing power of the Ministry of Health and that between the two there exists the closest possible clientele relationship; thus the collectivisation of medicine has led to the growing corporatisation of the medical corporations, especially the BMA with its great influence on the government. As a result, BMA officials are

becoming as powerful as the top civil servants. This affects the organisation of the BMA. The democratic framework may still be there, but the leadership now has wider scope. Further, Eckstein notes that the BMA was becoming less responsive to members' complaints. In other words, as the BMA was increasingly forced to organise its power in the face of the increasing power of central government, so it was becoming less responsive to its members.

According to Eckstein, pressure groups can try to exert pressure through four channels, the electorate, political parties, the legislature and the administrative departments. The BMA can clearly be seen to be concentrating its efforts on the administrative departments. Thus, having failed to influence the National Health Service Bill, the BMA was faced with the task of making it acceptable to its members, a task facilitated by the fact that the government did not fill in the details of the Act; this was due to be done through delegated legislation and departmental decision. Significantly (from the viewpoint of pressure groups as part of the political system) this passing of skeletal bills (or blank cheques) seems to be a traditional feature of the British style of government (perhaps a recognition of the presumed pluralistic nature of British society). With the National Health Service Act it has given rise to a state of affairs in which top BMA officials and top civil servants face each other as equals.

Another example of a profession acting as a pressure group is Barrington Kaye's sociological study of the architectural profession (4), showing how the profession struggled to gain registration for its members, although the real struggle was within the profession itself over the question of artistic autonomy. Once the profession decided it wanted registration, Parliament agreed; it might not have done so for a lesser

profession. The ultimate objective of registration is to prevent anyone performing the duties of an architect unless he is registered, and Kaye concludes 'The Registration Acts represent the logical outcome of the professional impulse to guarantee integrity and competence. Statutory registration is professionalism pushed to its ultimate conclusion'. Thus while in earlier times each practitioner had to establish his professional position by repute, the act of registration now does this, but in return the state gives the profession a monopoly in its sphere.

These examples of the doctors and the architects show how a profession seeks to safeguard its interests, in such matters as pay and conditions of employment, and registration through political pressure, either on the executive or on the legislature. However, a profession also seeks to safeguard the integrity of its expertise in addition to its more obvious professional interests. Its expertise is a resource which it controls. It may use it to influence government policy as well as a professional service. A profession's political power as a pressure group is based on its professional expertise, particularly its control over information and its ability and willingness to communicate this information to those in authority in return for valuable concessions. The concessions sought may not be only in the interests of the profession but also for powerful clients of the profession. In describing what he calls the 'policies of legislation', M.J. Barnett shows how the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors influenced the government when the Rent Act of 1957 was being drafted. (5) Firstly, the members of the profession and the senior civil servants were able to consult freely as equals, and secondly the profession had a monopoly of expertise which in itself gave it considerable power in its dealings with the government. Barnett puts

it thus:

'The senior members of the Institution have been regarded as much members of the Establishment as the permanent secretaries of the Ministries, and indeed perhaps more so, as their claim to status has been *ex persona not ex officio*. This, and a large establishment which was equipped to staff committees of member-experts, gave the Institution a prime right to be consulted on all legislation relating to rents.

These consultations took several forms. When the Bill was published, the Institution's Parliamentary Committee prepared a report issued in the name of the Institution. This covered a wide variety of matters, both general and specific. In addition, specific proposals were made for changes, and comments were published from time to time. In the normal course of things, the civil service would consult with the assistant secretary of RICS in charge of rents on technical points. The assistant secretary might or might not ask members of his committees for expert advice. In 1957 the assistant secretary, Mr. Robert Steel, was a barrister and himself the author of several books on rent restriction. His participation in 1954 and earlier established a basis of informal contacts between the organisation and the Ministry. In addition there were informal contacts between senior members of the RICS and the minister. While at the time the president, Mr. Bull, did not know Mr. Sandys personally, others certainly did. Informal exchanges took place

both before and after publication of the Bill. These were two-way. Mr. Sandys consulted on key provisions. Professional friends called particular problems to his attention. This was all quite proper. Finally, members sent letters to newspapers to pursue their own positions on the Bill quite apart from the activities of the Institution as such. The institutional background to these consultations was of some interest; it helped to explain the advice given'. (6)

Clearly here was a willingness and an ability to communicate; and Barnett goes on to show that the influence of professional expertise not only gives a profession considerable power in protecting the interests of its members (as in the BMA example) but it also enables it to influence policy and legislation in those matters to which its expertise relates, or put another way, it enables the profession to get the legislation adapted to its own ideology, to its own views of society and the place of its expertise in that society. Thus Barnett, when describing the influence of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (and the Association of Landed Property Owners) states:

'The dominant conclusion which emerges from the activities of pressure groups engaged in the 1957 Rent Act debates was the advantage which a known supply of information gave to particular groups. The two groups which were known by the Ministry as reliable sources of advice and information and whose staff were well known in the Ministry, the RICS and the ALPO, had easiest access and seemed to have made the more significant contributions to the Act. The other groups had



lesser impact, down to the purely public pressure of the tenants' associations, which had none.

The advantage possessed by the RICS and the ALPO lay not merely in the ease of access they possessed, but in the time at which they could exert influence. Unlike the other organisations, they were able to influence decisions before the White Paper, or basic policy decisions, let alone a Bill, were prepared. The influence may not have been much in this case, and it is particularly difficult to trace, being essentially informal and private.

There was little mention, by any of the participants, of the 'national interest'. Each pressure group consciously attempted to improve the position of its clients'. (7)

Professions will try to safeguard their interests. But do they exert undue influence? Do they promote their particular aims, as described here, at the expense of the general good? One perhaps rather extreme view, based on American experience, is put forward by Gilb, who sees professional associations as preliminary arenas of public law-making rather than outside pressure groups. (8)

However, is the American experience described by Gilb and others true of Britain? Do the professions here really have political power? Reader has suggested that historically the professions in this country have not really sought this power and the examples quoted here show their exercise of power to be more limited.

It is difficult to measure the extent of this power because its

use is covert, but it does seem to depend on:

- (i) Whether what the profession wants is something purely parochial;
- (ii) The complexion of the government of the day;
- (iii) To what extent the particular profession concerned is really part of the ruling elite.

On the first point, Kaye shows that the architectural profession was successful in getting Parliament to agree to registration once the profession itself had made up its mind that it wanted it. The matter was mainly of parochial interest and there were no important interests opposing it. (9)

On the second point, one could contrast the success of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in shaping the Rent Act 1957 with its singular lack of success on the Land Community Act 1975, (10) due to its closeness to the government of the day.

The third factor, the profession's place among the ruling elite, is more difficult since one first has to ask the important question, are the professions part of the ruling elite even if they are not seeking political power as an end in itself? For example, do the senior officers of the BMA and the senior civil servants form part of what Mills has called a power elite, in which there is a coincidence of interests among top institutional orders and where the individuals are psychologically similar through sharing a similar social background. Alternatively, is there really a balanced plurality of interest groups? Thus, is the BMA (and similar professional organisations) part of the elite or part of a layer beneath the elite of balanced competing interest groups? The answer suggested by the studies quoted here would seem to be that they are part of the elite, sharing the same ideologies. Eckstein shows the existence

of an old-boy network governing the relations between BMA and MOH officials, and other studies have shown a clear link between higher civil servants and political leaders.

It should be pointed out that Eckstein himself comes to a rather different conclusion. (11) He says pressure groups serve an integrative function, they are part of the political system, a system which cannot be understood merely by looking at the Constitution. He sees pressure groups as defining opinions for governments. Their function is to affect decisions without affecting the position of the decision-makers. The pressure group system is a competition to influence decisions. In contrast, competition for power is the function of the political parties.

What Eckstein seems to be doing is to put forward a pluralistic model of the political system when his facts seems to point to a contrary conclusion. The picture which his data presents is of elites talking to elites. No doubt as one descends the professional hierarchy a different picture would emerge, so that top officials of the NUT may be different social animals from high civil servants in the DES, but for the higher professions there would appear to be a unified elite, a proposition which perhaps an investigation into property-ownership might help to establish. In particular, an analysis of the composition of leading groups, professional and otherwise, might help to show how power is really exercised.

## 2. THE POWER OF PROFESSIONS IN RELATION TO CLIENTS

Does a profession control its clients, or do the clients control the professions? What is the nature of client/professional control? How do clients articulate their wants? Is it perhaps the professions who really define the nature of the service which the client shall receive? Chapter V, which deals with professional ideologies, will show how professions are able to define situations and the services their clients shall receive,

for example, how psychiatrists use professional ideologies to justify treatments. In this section the field of study is narrower, being confined to the question who controls who and how. An investigation of Johnson's model of professional control is a good place to start. (12)

Johnson, in arguing that professionalism is a type of occupational control, sets out a typology which focuses on the core of uncertainty, the producer-consumer relationship. The following typology shows three types of relationships between professional and clients:

- (i) Collegiate control is normally associated with the ideal of the independent professional. Here the professional may be in a powerful position vis-a-vis a large unorganised body of clients. There would be occupational homogeneity, a community of equal competence with cohesion based on common experience and exclusion of outsiders. In this way a profession tries to define the image their unorganised clientele would have of them.
- (ii) In control through corporate patronage consumers have the capacity to define their needs:  
'..... a patronage system can develop where a few large scale corporations are the major consumers of 'expert' services. Where these conditions prevail the technically-based authority of an occupation and autonomy deriving from social distance are both at a minimum. The patron is relatively independent and unexploitable by virtue of his wider social bases of power'. Here the definition of professional gentleman is governed by what is acceptable to the patron and the concept of occupational hierarchy may replace that of professional community.
- (iii) The third type of control examined by Johnson is that of mediation, where the state intervenes to protect consumer, or producer, or

public, as with the National Health Service. This is particularly likely to occur where there is a guaranteed clientele. It is this type of control which especially seems to upset Lewis and Maude who, in 'Professional People', see it as an erosion of professional values such as independence and pride in the work.

Johnson is looking at the variations in potential for autonomy among various professions, which he seeks to show is based on the professional/client relationship. Thus Johnson has provided a model which can be used to analyse the power of professions over the clients and vice-versa. For example, in collegiate control, a homogeneous profession faces a heterogeneity of clients, and seeks to maintain this position by maintaining homogeneity through such processes as control of admission, professional socialisation and peer group control. However, Johnson shows one type of problem which might arise. A large heterogeneous clientele is a condition of professionalism, he says, but the vagaries of consumer choice adversely affect occupational control by, for example, channelling fees in the direction of some professionals rather than others. Thus one function of a ban on advertising is to minimise the threat to homogeneity by limiting the extent to which wealthy members can take advantage of their already favoured position.

In patronage the homogeneous community which is characteristic of professionalism is displaced by a hierarchical form of organisation, and the leading members of the profession share the social position of the patron. Hence, while in collegiate control the professional can exercise some power over the client, in patronage the client has power, since here the practitioner must know and do what is expected of him. The professional's response here may be to try to become a good houseman in order

to maintain his authority.

Mediation represents a further limitation upon purely professional power where the state for example controls the distribution of professional resources in the interests of the clientele, and where professional expertise shrinks as a result of the bureaucratisation of tasks. Here one response by the professional may be to seek to expand his managerial authority.

Johnson's study could be criticised in that it concentrates on the power of clients, saying little on the inherent power some professions possess, especially by virtue of the status of groups from which members of particular professions are drawn. Take, for example, the cluster of professions associated with the Health Service. It is true that a mediation model could be applied generally to the Health Service; but, looking at the medical profession itself, the most interesting question is why it is able to maintain its autonomy in view of the bureaucratisation of medicine. It would seem here that a power-from-status approach may be more realistic sometimes than a power-from-client approach. Nevertheless, his analysis of these three types of control and how, eventually, the professional may become bureaucratised, could be applied to the history of many professions and their relationships with clients.

It is possible thus to see in the development of many professions a change in the status of the professional man from being an adviser to a gentleman, to the position of an independent expert, and eventually in some cases to that of the employee with expert knowledge. Hence the status and influence of the professional man is closely related to that of the client and his fortunes. An example of this is shown in Barrington Kaye's empirical study of the architectural profession:

'It has been shown (above) that the noble patron of

the eighteenth century was gradually replaced by the municipalities, public companies and clubs that commissioned the buildings of the Greek Revival; they were followed by the wealthy industrialists, the Anglo-Indian nabobs and, most important of all, the clergy and parish councils, during the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The Domestic Revival was characterised by a wealthy middle-class clientage; that class, in fact, from which most of the architects of the movement sprang. During the twentieth century, however, a new type of relationship began to appear; that between the government or municipality and the architect, not who was commissioned by them, but who was in their full-time employment - in a word, the official architect.

With the official architect, the dilemma of artistic autonomy theoretically becomes acute. Much of his work consists of co-operating with other professional technicians, serving on committees, carrying out instructions, on the execution of all of which his claim to artistic autonomy may well be regarded as irrelevant by those whom he serves'. (13)

Again, F.M.L. Thompson also shows how the status of the surveyor has changed. Throughout the nineteenth century, surveyors were mainly self-employed and their clients were mainly landed gentlemen. The growth of the public sector has meant not only a change in the professional/client relationship, but also, according to Thompson, a change in the type of surveyor:

'The growth of surveyorship appointments in the public service (since the 1880s) chiefly in the Inland Revenue, Board of Trade, Transport and the Service Ministries, and in local government, has thus served to make the profession more open at the top, just as the spread of secondary education has made it more open at the point of recruitment'. (14)

The loss of autonomy of the professional man is a theme of many of the studies on the professions. They perhaps over-emphasise the independence of the private practitioner and under-play the authority of the professional employee today.

Hughes has also shown how the power relations between professional and client have changed over time. (15) He shows that the cherished



freedom of the professional to choose his clients and his own style of work (if it ever existed in some professions) is not now necessarily the epitome of professionalism; that such professionals are 'utter captives and chore boys of their clients'. This last point is borne out by contrasting Carlin's study 'Lawyers on their Own', in which he shows that the solo practitioners have little freedom, with Smigel's study of the Wall Street Lawyer, who, though he works in a bureaucracy and cannot choose clients, has much greater autonomy. (16) (17)

From Carlin's description it seems that his solo lawyer is more or less dependent on the client, whereas the bureaucratic Wall Street law firm described by Smigel can pick and choose its clients.

Hughes puts the position thus:

'and here we are at the paradox of modern professional freedom. The effective freedom to choose one's special line of work, to have access to the appropriate clients and equipment, to engage in that converse with eager and competent colleagues which will sharpen one's knowledge and skill, to organise one's time and effort so as to attain that end, and even freedom from pressure to conform to the clients' individual or collective customs and opinions seem, in many lines of work, to be much greater for those professionals who have employers and work inside complicated and even bureaucratic organisations than for those who, according to the traditional concept, are in independent practice. Penetrating analysis of this paradox and of the problems related to it is a major task of social science. It will centre largely around study of professions, old and new'. (18)

This leads to the next important question to be considered, the power of the professions in bureaucracies, which can be seen as a special type of client. However, before leaving the question of professional/client relationships, there is a further point to be made. One should be careful not to over-emphasise the importance of the client. Hughes has shown that the professional man is really 'performing' for an audience of fellow professionals; it is their opinions that he values most, not the clients'. It is with the profession and its values that he identifies himself. (19) The study by Freidson and Rhea shows that only slight pressure by professional colleagues is necessary to bring an individual professional back into line. (20) These matters will be discussed further when the question of peer group control is considered.

### 3. THE POWER OF PROFESSIONS IN BUREAUCRACIES

The weakness of many professions is the monopoly position of the client as sole employer for their services. This can result in either the profession concerned succumbing to the power of the employing organisation and accepting its values, or setting up a trade-union type organisation to face the employers.

Although professions like social work are weak, they do not necessarily succumb to the power of the bureaucracy. As Nina Toren states:

'Social work as well as other semi-professions incorporates diverse attributes, some of which are conducive to organisational regulation and control such as a relatively short training period, no developed theoretical knowledge base, feminisation, recruitment from lower classes, and so on. Other attributes, however, such as dealing with people and some of their more severe problems are inherently

incompatible with the bureaucratic principle. The autonomy of professionals within a bureaucratic framework is threatened only insofar as the organisational structure interferes either with the development of application of professional knowledge or with the service orientation, ie the professional commitment to place the client's interest above all others'. (21)

W.R. Scott says a source of conflict is the professional's conditional loyalty to the bureaucracy; in social work there is the question of loyalty to the client, and also loyalty to the professional ethic. (22) On the other hand, Smith and Harris believe that the professional ideologies about social need are the same for both the social worker and her employer. Case loads are classified and allocated according to common ideologies. (23)

If a conflict arises between the professional employees and the employing bureaucracy, the employees would have to decide how best to mobilise power, whether through a profession-type or trade union-type of organisation. Where conflict does arise many organisations seem to be on the latter lines, but Kornhauser describes how higher professionals are able to protect their status etc in a bureaucracy without resort to trade union-type sanctions. (24) He shows that organisational controls are relied upon to a greater extent in the sphere of general policy, in research areas close to operations and by top research directors, whereas professional controls are used more extensively in research assignments and procedures in more basic research areas.

This state of affairs is also applicable to Freidson's studies of doctors in hospitals; it is the controls and values of the medical profession rather than those of the hospital bureaucracy which guide and

constrain the doctor. (25)

Given a choice, most middle-class employees would probably prefer to organise their power as a profession rather than a trade union. However, after 'selling professionalism' to the employing bureaucracy, the employee may find that this no longer effectively protects his interests. Jeremy Tunstall (26) describes this sort of situation which resulted in the decline of the 'Professional' Institute of Journalists and the rise of the National Union of Journalists. The NUT would seem to be an example of an organisation which cannot make up its mind whether it is a profession or a union, though with its increasing willingness to strike, it is tending to the latter. It might, however, be necessary to distinguish between organisational tactics and individual attitudes so that whereas sometimes the NUT acts like a trade union, its individual members may still consider themselves to be professionals. One could, perhaps, conclude that there is a general tendency for semi-professions to become more union-like. On the other hand, new professions are arising for routine type work, for example, the Association of Legal Executives (solicitors' clerks) and the Society of Surveying Technicians; these, however, are for employees not working in large scale bureaucracies.

From the writer's personal experience as a valuation surveyor in the Inland Revenue Office (and in the Greater London Council), it could be added that within bureaucracies there is a remarkably high degree of consciousness of professional status. The surveyor takes as his reference group not the employing bureaucracy, but the profession. He separates himself from clerical workers and even other professionals, for example usually dining with fellow surveyors. Although Inland Revenue surveyors are members of the Institute of Professional Civil Servants they, like other groups, have their own section within it, the Association of

Valuation Office Valuers. Control by the Board of Inland Revenue is only indirect; it is mediated by the Chief Valuer and his staff so that control is in effect by fellow professionals to whose positions the Inland Revenue surveyor aspires. The Chief Valuer and some of the officers of AVOV are frequently members of the Council of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, thus establishing a link between the bureaucracy and the profession. In their day to day work most surveyors are guided by the professional ethic and thus seek to put a fair valuation on property being valued for estate duty, capital gains tax, etc. rather than seek maximum revenue (although the bureaucracy may claim that this was also their aim).

It could perhaps be concluded that, while in some bureaucracies the professional is adopting a more trade union-like stance to protect his interests, this is not necessarily the norm. Nor does increasing bureaucratisation necessarily imply the dilution of professionalism which Lewis and Maude have suggested. In some semi-professions like social work, the nature of the professional/client relationship may ensure the continuation of the professional ethos. In other bureaucratic situations employees may seek upward mobility by claiming professional status for their work group, thereby occasioning an actual increase in professionalisation. Professionals generally, by virtue of their previous socialisation, will seek to maintain the identity which their profession gives them. Finally, professions as institutions strive to maintain the authority of their expertise, and professional ideologies could be seen as an aspect of this.

## CONCLUSIONS

In the first part of this chapter, it was shown that professions do not seek political power but rather influence over areas of corporate concern, and that to achieve this they often act as pressure groups, with varying success, depending on their status and on the disposition of the government of the day.

In the section on the power of professions in relation to clients, it was found that Johnson's typologies of the three types of relationship between professionals and clients, that is collegiate, corporate and mediation control, was useful. It was shown how the architecture and surveying professions developed in this country, partly in order to guarantee a quality of service which hitherto had depended on the reputation of individual practitioners. However, it was also stressed that professionals often value the opinion of fellow professionals more than that of clients and this seems to be most important since it is in this way that the professional is able to define the nature of the services that the client shall receive.

Finally, when dealing with professional employees, it was shown that increasing bureaucratisation did not imply the demise of professional authority.

Before leaving the question of the power of professions in society, three other aspects should be mentioned here.

Firstly, what influence do professions have on societal values, how can they persuade the public to accept their values and definitions? Leading on from this, how do professions use the power of their expertise? What is their functional power? Both these topics involve consideration of professional ideologies, the culture of a profession, how it affects members, the public in contact and the public at large. Thus they will

be considered in Chapter V on professional ideologies.

The third topic that concerns the power of the professions is a consideration of their class position and this will be considered in the final chapter here.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PROFESSIONS' POWER OVER ITS OWN MEMBERS I

The previous chapter dealt with the exercise of professional power, how professions exert influence on government, client and employing bureaucracy. Now it is necessary to consider how a profession mobilises its power, since its ability to persuade and control its own members is a necessary pre-requisite to going out into society for the purpose of furthering the professions' ends.

In order to exercise control over its members, some form of institutional control is necessary, and this chapter briefly considers first the historical growth of professions as social institutions. It then examines how professions are controlled by elites and how members control each other's behaviour through peer group control. Finally, it is argued that the crucial factor is 'self-control' by individuals, and this leads on to the next chapter, which deals with professional socialisation, the means through which self-control is really achieved.

#### 1. THE GROWTH OF PROFESSIONAL CONTROL AND THE FORMALISING OF ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Historical studies of various professions, some of which are quoted here, seem to show common themes in the growth of professions. Gilb has provided a model which may be useful in studying this. He charts the growth of a professional organisation as follows: (1)

- (i) A period when the elite makes decisions informally;
- (ii) A period when different categories of interests within the body politic become more formally articulated;
- (iii) Finally, a period when the differentiated and articulated parts of the system are more closely integrated.



A profession becomes established when it is able to sell its services and indeed itself to the public and when it can obtain control over its members. The control over its members is maintained by the profession's control over the type of people it will admit, their education and apprenticeship. Gilb's three periods outlined above may be seen as a progression to this stage partly because in the first period the profession may not be particularly powerful and partly because the members have similar social characteristics in the early stages of a profession and, therefore, the exercise of formal control is less necessary.

In other words, in the early stage of a profession's history, entrance is by status. Later, when the profession is larger and less homogeneous, its leaders have to take steps to establish organisational machinery in order to maintain status, and Gilb argues that the leaders of a profession are men who recognise status within the field, operate from positions of relative institutional power and command the sources of institutionalised recruitment. (2)

Even when admitted, the recruit's progress can be controlled by the professional organisation through, in effect, its control of the value system. Further, Oswald Hall develops the idea of control through sponsorship, a process which seems more important in the United States than here. (3) Thus Hall contrasts the fortunes of the Yankee elite doctor with that of the American immigrant and shows how sponsorship operates in practice.

Specifically on the question of recruitment, one could say that whereas in the nineteenth century entrance to a profession was by status, today entrance is by examination but that though this may appear to be a rational basis now, in fact status is still important. Thus entrance

through 'A' level requirements is really a matter of status, since a profession may not want to be known as an 'O' level profession.

The transition from 'status' to 'examination' qualification for entry is shown in the following examples of the architectural profession:

'The first three decades of the nineteenth century were characterised by chaos; architects, newly deprived of the protection and security of patronage, were faced with the unscrupulous competition of quacks, and their prestige with the public was negligible. The middle decades saw the beginnings of professionalism, and at the same time the emergence of the artist-architect. Although the conflict between the two viewpoints flared up in a number of instances, over artistic autonomy in public competitions, for instance, yet insofar as the professionals represented only a minority, a large-scale clash was averted. The third phase, however, saw professionalism established, and with the great depression adding economic urgency to their logic, the professionals embarked on a period of regulation and control, aiming at the eventual complete closure of the profession. That they were able openly to avow such an aim was in accordance with the swing of political thought towards collectivism.

The activities of the RIBA during this last period took two main forms: (i) the extension of membership, and (ii) the development of the examination system'. (4)

Kaye is thus chronicling the progression from chaos and artistic autonomy to professionalism and institutional control.

## 2. CONTROL OF A PROFESSION BY ITS ELITE

To what extent is a profession controlled by its elite, and how is such control exercised? Can we distinguish between elite and rank and file and how should this matter be investigated? These are some of the items considered in this section.

Although one could examine the way in which the elite controls the decision-making organs of professional institutions, such as the council and its main committee, a more interesting and important question is the way the elite influence the values of the professions, since it is this which probably shows the essence of a profession by highlighting its values and its power. This involves studying exactly what these values are, how widely they are held in the profession, and how the elite controls the professional value system. Smigel has shown that the professional ethic of the American legal profession is largely the ethic of the elite, the Wall Street lawyers etc., yet it also seems that this ethic is tailor-made to suit the requirements of this elite. Thus the strict rules against blatant advertising, touting for business, do not worry the Wall Street law firms whose clients are mainly the large corporations, who would seek top rank lawyers in any case. These rules are however a nuisance to the 'back street lawyer' and it is not surprising to find that the professional ethic is less strong in these people. Nevertheless, they still have to play by the rules. (5)

It seems important then to establish exactly who the elite are in order to see more clearly the ways in which it exercises control.

Kenneth Thompson in his essay 'Church of England Bishops as an Elite' looked at changes in the recruitment of clergy. (6) He found that while 88% of Bishops were Oxbridge men in 1970 and had shown little change since last century, there was a decline in the percentage of

graduate ordinands and an increasing divergence between the episcopal elite and the parochial clergy generally, although this is not discussed in the Church, as the prevailing ideology has been one of optimism about the continuing reduction in the degree of social distance between elite and non-elite. Again, in 1960-62, 27% of candidates were from public schools against 85% of Bishops; 54% of Bishops were the sons of clergy against 8% of ordinands generally. Bishops went to the four elite theological colleges.

Thompson then argues that in studying elites we should look for moral and social integration. Moral integration means shared ideas, a common moral ethos and a consciousness of overall solidarity. Social integration denotes the frequency and nature of social contacts and relationships between elite groups. Anglican Bishops would appear to be a well-integrated elite, having the same beliefs and having attended the same (public) schools and colleges. The improvements in technical education have tended to widen the gap between the elite and the rest, since the former attend elite theological colleges. Again, while there has been a trend towards heterogeneity in the background of clergy, the elite has remained homogeneous.

In spite of increasing bureaucratisation and professionalisation, the Bishops are able to preserve their traditional authority. True, the social background of non-elite recruits has widened, but as Thompson concludes:

'Changes in the status and composition of the lower clergy, which weaken their traditional character and background, have been justified in terms of rational-legal and institutionalised charismatic criteria, eg the need for specialised ministries,

or the claim that the priestly office sheds its light on the occupant irrespective of his social background.

What is significant is that neither of these latter considerations has been applied to the episcopate. The Bishops provide the traditional counterbalance. If the Church of England is to maintain its ecclesia identity, then the Bishops are likely to remain a mainly traditional and homogeneous elite'. (7)

### 3. PEER GROUP CONTROL

Another means of control arises from the fact that a professional man's work is judged by his peers, his fellow professionals, as well as his clients and the public.

Gilb advances the interesting idea of freedom through conformity. He says the stronger the professional organisation's hold over the individual practitioner, the greater will be the latter's freedom in his working life, since the profession will then be in a stronger position to channel the advancement of the craft mystery. This will make the individual practitioner more acceptable to the public and thereby increase his autonomy. (8)

Caplow develops a similar idea to Gilb's 'Freedom through Conformity'. He says that in the tight group you are less aware of coercion, and then he puts forward the following propositions: (9)

- (i) The longer the period of occupational formation the more completely are the rules internalised and the greater will be the participant's identification with the group;
- (ii) The greater the identification with the group the less the resistance to it;

(iii) The more uniform and unchanging the rules the less the resistance they will encounter. The wider the area of the rules the more easily they will be observed. Here professions have an advantage over crafts;

(iv) The more unified the agencies of control the easier it will be to follow the rules. Here the professional organisation is an example of unified control whereas a factory worker may be subject to the control of both employer and trade union and his attitude to the union may not be much friendlier than towards management.

Caplow's views are interesting in two ways. Firstly, as he suggests, they show up the paradoxes of control versus coercion; that the greater the profession's control the less the coercion. Secondly, his four propositions or paradoxes could be used empirically to give the researcher an index of professionalisation, an index of internal professional control. This index of internal control could then be correlated with external influence, for which some measure would have to be developed. In this way one might show that the greater the index of professionalisation the less the external influence. Again one could relate the index of professionalisation with some measure of community feeling within a profession, for example, do the members interact mainly with fellow professionals outside working hours? It might also be interesting to study the hierarchy of professions with the aid of this index of professionalisation and what we are likely to find here is that the higher professions (ie those with higher status and power) depend greatly on members' internalised controls.

In spite of the importance of professional socialisation, group control is always necessary. A frequent theme in studies of the sociology of the profession is 'for whom is the professional performing, what is his

reference group?' In the discussion on professional socialisation in the next section it will be seen that one of the functions of socialisation is to attach the individual to the group, to ensure the sharing of common values and a common identity, in short to ensure adherence to a common ideology. To some extent professionals are one another's policemen, ensuring adherence to these common ideals. (10) The reward for each member is the applause of the group, as shown by social advancement and career success. Indeed, success and even professional competence generally seems to be largely what the professional group say is success, for example, a cure is what the medical profession says is a cure, according to Eliot Freidson. (11)

The professional who fails to respect group norms makes his colleagues feel uncomfortable, perhaps even unsure of their values; it is not surprising they in turn may make him feel uncomfortable. Generally speaking, because he has invested so much emotional effort in the profession he is unlikely to step out of line, and the older he is the greater his investment, the stronger his commitment, and the greater his conformity. True, there are institutionalised safety valves for mavericks; an accountant who has failed to attain a good partnership by the age of 35 may become a teacher of accountancy at a technical college, or seek employment in the Civil Service, where professional peer group control is weaker and his lack of professional success less noticeable. In the mainstream of professional life, however, it would seem that peer group control is important, and, if a professional man's self-control is weak through inadequate socialisation, the group will ensure his conformity if necessary by the threat of exclusion, although social pressures are usually adequate.

Freidson and Rhea in discussing the process of control in a company of equals ask whether colleague control is adequate in a bureaucracy such

as a hospital. (12) The hospital has its rules on medical practice but the most important rules on the technical code of practice are more policy statements than regulations; they assert that the highest medical standards must be maintained, but do not specify procedures, which, as Freidson and Rhea observe:

'... places determination of what is proper first of all in the hands of the workers themselves, and second, no less importantly, in the hands of any representative of the extra-clinic professional community who may be called in to evaluate the work being performed inside. This 'rule' effectively prevents the development of the conflict in technical affairs between bureaucratic office and the experts of which Parsons made so much in his discussion of the two. What conflict we observed in technical affairs was between professional opinions - for example, between that of the clinic doctors, and of professional consultants from outside the clinic.' (13)

Again, the patient's opinion is not accepted as a valid indication of a doctor's performance, and the medical records are regarded as the doctor's working tools rather than a supervisory device. The control comes from colleagues. In surgery, other members of the team can observe the performance. In other specialties a man's quality comes to be known indirectly, for example when patients are seen by more than one doctor, or are referred to other specialties. Eventually opinions coalesce and a collective definition emerges:

'Albeit slowly and selectively, some information about deviance does come to light. How is it handled? When physicians are asked what they would do about an



offending colleagues, the usual response is 'Nothing'. Asked what they would do if the offence were repeated, however, they answer 'I'd talk to him'. 'Talking-to' is in fact the most ubiquitous sanction in the clinic and is used by both colleagues and administration as virtually the only means of punishment. From the examples we have collected, talking-to seems to involve various blends of instruction, friendly persuasion of error, shaming the offender, and threatening him with retaliation.' (14)

The 'Talking-to' then is the usual informal sanction among peers in a profession, and may be used by superiors to warn of further punishments. Of course, there are institutional controls in most professions, for example, in Britain the existence of institutions like the General Medical Council provides a sanction in extreme cases and spills over into other less extreme infractions. However, talking-to seems to be the only institutionalised punishment short of dismissal and since formal dismissal is almost impossible, talking-to is virtually the only sanction available.

The peer group sanction here is subtle, and it seems to work because of socialisation. In the same way the rewards system is subtle too, being largely symbolic, involving a recognition of what the doctor feels is due to him at the particular stage in his career, for example, being relieved of 'dirty work' such as night calls.

Thus the medical profession appears to be largely self-regulating. However, it would seem wrong to suggest that it is chiefly peer group control that is responsible for the self-regulating nature of the professions. It could perhaps be asserted that true control is based on self-control, that is internalisation of the correct norms, and that this

comes from correct socialisation whereby the individual fully identifies with and commits himself to his chosen profession. This aspect of professional control is so important that it merits a chapter of its own.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PROFESSION'S POWER OVER ITS OWN MEMBERS II

#### CONTROL THROUGH SOCIALISATION - INTRODUCTION

It is argued here that the most important method by which professional organisations control members is through their ability to get members to identify with the profession. Becker and Carper say that among the mechanisms operating to produce changes in identity are the development of problem interest and pride in new skills, the acquisition of professional ideology, investment, the internalisation of motives and sponsorship. (1) Thus professional socialisation is used to establish an identity and a certain type of personality, according to Hughes:

'... (occupational groups) insist that the individual accept identification with the occupational group as part of his definition of himself, as a significant and persistent answer to the self-put question 'Who am I?' and the question put by others 'Who are you?'. (2)

Similarly socialisation has been expressed in terms of shared ordeals which symbolise status passage. Indeed, the severity of the ordeal could be taken as another index of professionalisation. The professional exams, the 'practical' training, the meetings, the Inn dinners etc, can be seen as part of the ordeal (it is not essential that the ordeal be related to the new entrant's future professional work, its significance is essentially symbolic both to the novice and to the master, it symbolises his passage from the former to the latter). Thus, for example, so-called 'practical training' often forms an important part of the institutionalised ordeal, and as A.J. Reader says:

'When governing bodies (of the professions) come

to fix the length of time required for articles they are not inclined to underestimate the obtuseness of their craft nor to overestimate the pupil's ability to unravel it'. (3)

Professional socialisation is the learning of a new sub-world, and a new set of values. Its function is to attach the individual firmly to the group and to change his own personality to some extent since personality can be seen as comprising internalised roles. By internalising the role of the professional man he acquires the appropriate personality. Thus, central to any discussion of professional socialisation is the question of identity; how is the professional personality acquired? This is the question that will be examined first in this chapter.

#### 1. ACQUIRING A PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

One example of the identification approach to professional socialisation is that of Becker and Carper, who ask 'How do individuals identify themselves?' How do they answer the question - who am I? (4)

They found that the question was answered in terms of the categories used in the groups of which they were currently members. Individuals learn who they are by applying these labels to themselves, thereby acquiring a self and a set of perspectives in terms of which their conduct is shaped.. The names given to kinds of work carry a great deal of symbolic meaning which tends to be incorporated in the individual's identity. They specify the areas of endeavour belonging to those bearing the name (physiologists etc). These meanings are often systematised into elaborate ideologies which itemise the qualities of those so identified. Thus physiologists feel themselves part of a large group building up a science ('we write the music the doctors play'). The engineer's ideology is that the person so named has learned to

think rationally and can solve any kind of problem. On the other hand philosophers do not identify so strongly and will say they chose this title as the least undesirable one.

On social position the researchers said that occupational identities tend to specify social class positions appropriate for the person doing that kind of work. Thus many of the physiologists, having come from lower middle class homes and being sensitive to parental aspirations hope that physiology will give them some of the prestige they desired as a physician. This was even more so with engineers, while the philosophy students had renounced social ascent in favour of identification with intellectuals, parental aspirations playing little part in the formation of their professional ambitions.

Becker and Carper ask: to what extent are the dimensions of work identification independent variables, and to what extent are they functionally or casually related? Sometimes they are mutually reinforcing, as with the physiologists who seek commitment to specific tasks, organisational settings and institutional positions, these fitting in with the limited social mobility they expect their work to provide. In contrast the engineer's commitment to broad areas of work and a wide range of possible tasks and organisational positions fits in with his expectations of greater social mobility but again the hypothesis of mutual reinforcement seems appropriate. Thus with both physiologists and engineers a theory of functional interdependence between the various elements of work identification seems to be plausible. However, with the philosophers a casual explanation seems to be indicated because of their lack of commitment to specific tasks, positions, organisations or social mobility, which seems to be deducible from their basic commitment to the intellectual life as they see it.

Becker and Carper have provided here a model which can be used

to classify and analyse the socialisation process, using the following four elements of work identification:

#### Elements of Work Identification

1. Occupational title and associated ideology
2. Commitment to task
3. Commitment to particular organisational or insitutional position
4. Significance for one's position in the larger society

The three occupational groups discussed here, the physiologists, mechanical engineers and philosophers, could then be analysed with the aid of a table, using these elements of work identification. Before doing this it will first be shown how such a classification would possibly be used for the estate management surveying profession in this country and based on my own experience of teaching surveying students in a polytechnic. (The statements made here about the surveying profession should be taken as hypotheses rather than findings).

On the first item, occupational title and associated ideology, it is clear that surveyors take pride in their practicality, how to deal with specific technical tasks such as valuing a property, or ascertaining structural defects in a building. They mostly enjoy lectures on practical problem-solving subjects and tend to dislike 'academic' subjects like economics and town planning theory. It is true there is some sensible justification for this attitude, in view of their future work, but the feeling is so strong that it may be correct to call it an ideology.

On commitment to task there are here a few basic techniques,

but many students see their working life not so much in performing the valuation skills of a surveyor but rather as a means of progress to a cherished goal, to become a partner in a good firm. The task is therefore a means in building up a good reputation upon which his progress depends; it is a means to an end, since a valuation is not like completing a work of art or designing a bridge, it cannot be shown off and is soon out of date.

On item 3, the reference point is clear, a good partnership, and even those surveyors employed in the public sector refer to private practice as their datum, since many still hope for a partnership, or may privately acknowledge that they may have 'missed the bus'. There is little commitment to an employing bureaucracy like the Inland Revenue Valuation Office or the Greater London Council.

Lastly, surveyors are ambitious. They seek standing in the community as shown, for example, by the surprisingly large number of surveyors on local councils. Status and success are important and a good partnership is a sign that one has arrived.

These hypotheses on the surveying profession are set out in the following table alongside Becker and Carper's own findings.(see next page)

Another article by Becker and Carper 'The Development of Identification with an Occupation', (5) sets out more specifically to show how occupational personality is formed and to see how career movements transform the self-image and thus create the conditions for further movement.

For their analysis they use two main concepts; firstly, the concept of 'career', which they see as a sequence of movements dependent upon the evaluative responses of important persons and groups; secondly, the 'subjective aspects' of such movement in terms of self identity and transformations. In other words, they are asking how identities are stabilised or transformed. In studying how new refer-

Elements of Work Identification	Physiologists	Mechanical Engineers	Philosophers	Surveyors
1. Occupational title and associated ideology	Scientists	Practical problem solver	Intellectual and Freemen	Practical problem solver and confidential adviser to private client
2. Commitment to task	They see a limited range of problems to which their professional lives will be devoted and a set of basic techniques in which they take great pride	The opposite of physiologists - no commitment to task	Continuing to read and learn in all areas of intellectual activity  OUTLETS - Not specific jobs but journalism, politics, etc.	Little commitment to task itself. Having a reputation for reliability is more important
3. Commitment to particular organisation or institutional position	Sees position in organisations in terms of well-defined slots	Will work anywhere in the industrial system	No specific relationship to the occupational world	A partnership in a private firm of surveyors is the ultimate goal. It is also a reference point for the surveyors in the public service
4. Significance for one's position in the larger society	Sees society in terms of social mobility and seeks social mobility. (Maybe it is seen as an indication of how far a man has 'got on')	Like the physiologists	Does not see society in terms of social mobility. Identifies with the intellectual world	Like the physiologists. Getting on means added status



ence groups generate new identities, they were especially interested in those who failed to get re-admitted to medical school and therefore became physiology students. Although such students may still hope for re-admission they feel after a while that it would be a waste of time to start all over again. Conversion to the new group give the new ideology with which to discount the prestige of the medical profession, a profession which he now sees in terms of invidious comparison between art and science. He has thus become committed to his new profession.

Two questions have to be asked here. How does this conversion take place? and what is the nature of the occupational ideologies which, according to Becker and Carper, give the student his identity and hence profoundly shape his personality.

On conversion, the importance of informal groups is stressed. Thus they show the importance of informal apprenticeship systems, sponsorship by professors (which obligates the students to do well). They also describe the importance of coffee breaks and informal gatherings in integrating the student. Other mechanisms for producing change of identity through change of self-image are the development of problem interest, pride in new skills, and investment. The student finds answers to self-put questions about the worth of his activity in the developed professional ideology which, for engineers, would centre on the concept of the engineer as a logical thinker and the work motive to make money. The engineer's ideology comes not so much from peer groups but from their identification with engineering generally, schooling being seen as a means to an end, since increased ability ensures a wider range of jobs.

By concentrating on the professional socialisation process itself, almost in isolation, these sort of studies are interesting in showing how personality is formed through the process of identification and internalisation of appropriate symbols. One suggestion that could

be made is that research should concentrate more on the drop-outs and those who find the going tough even if they stay the course. One could then measure who succeeds and who does not in terms of sociological variables. One example of an attempt to do this is the Olesen and Whitaker study, where it was found that the 'failures' were frequently socially ineffective, at least so far as the nursing college was concerned. This meant that they could not effectively tune in to the student underground system whereby important information is passed on. In addition they were inefficient at 'psyching-out' and 'fronting'.

It could be argued that personal confidence depends on correct identification and that the confident person knows what his values are because he has chosen the 'correct' group and there has been no discontinuity, as during his life he moved upwards from one natural group to the next, from school, to University, to occupation, there has been no awkward switching of status.

On the other hand, the person who is not confident of his identity in the first place may not value anything that he possesses, including the group to which he belongs (which could be regarded as one of his possessions). He is thus not able to accept or be accepted by the group. Such a person could be seen as the marginal man, often socially mobile, usually not quite acceptable as exemplified by the nouveau riche, or by Carlin's solo lawyer. (6)

Smigel explains this well when, after showing that in addition to ability, the Wall Street firm assesses new applicants on lineage and personality (correct values). He shows the importance of elite preparatory schools in providing early contact with wealth and power and leading to admission to the right clubs at Harvard, thus establishing a continuity in progress which leads naturally to the Wall Street office. (7). Coming from the same background means that fewer rules are

needed and professional norms have more meaning for, and are more truly in the interests of, the elite.

Clearly here one can see the link between the essence of a profession, as embodied in its formal ethic, and the elite recruit.

Two main themes have thus been presented in this section of the chapter. Firstly, professional socialisation should be seen as a continuing process commencing in early childhood. The most successful professional socialisee is likely to be the man for whom there has been no awkward switching of status during the long socialisation process.

Secondly, this section could be seen as an attack on some conventional notions of occupational choice. Using the two articles by Becker and Carper in particular, it has been argued that the real choice is made after the man has been recruited to a profession. Thus the terms 'commitment' and 'investment' frequently used by Becker throughout his writings take on a special meaning in the context of occupational choice. 'Commitment' does not mean the free man's choice of an occupation. Rather, he is committed to it once the occupational socialisation process takes hold and he has acquired the appropriate identity and personality. Commitment means occupational choice after, not before, he has chosen. Similarly, 'investment' denotes the personal resources the socialisee has used in his training, his time and effort, and the rewards resulting in the form of occupational success and friendships formed. The longer he stays in an occupation the greater his commitment and investment; with time there is no turning back without damage to the personality. The main difference between the more successful professional socialisee and the mediocre is that the former was 'committed' earlier.

Elliott shows that the concepts of commitment and career provide the link between occupational recruitment and social selection. (8)

At one extreme occupational choice could be seen as an individual act

of free will. At the other one could see the individual's occupational choice and his other social actions as being determined by the strata of society from which he comes. The second explanation is clearly not adequate, as Blau and Duncan (9) and others have shown professions are not homogeneous in their recruitment of members. On the other hand, occupational choice is not a free act of free will, made dispassionately and based on adequate knowledge. The model of economic man is inadequate if only because a person acts on inadequate information, due to the fact that his local milieu, as determined mainly by class, limits his access to information, affects the way he perceives new information and in addition has led him to make earlier decisions which limit his range of occupational choice. A softer determinist view of occupational choice and socialisation to an occupation would be that the individual acts within a situation as he perceives and interprets it.

Thus in assessing Becker and Carper's account of professional socialisation and identification with a profession, one should beware of putting an over-deterministic interpretation on it. In particular, their concept of commitment may be too simple and Elliott has distinguished three different processes of commitment, possibility commitment, cost commitment and social commitment. (10)

Possibility commitment refers to the social world that the individual creates for himself as he passes from one social institution to another, from a grammar school to a university, and then to a higher profession. Thus in Becker's terms as an individual specialises, career costs accumulate against a change of career, as has been shown in the example quoted here, hence the idea of cost commitment, which makes it difficult for the individual to turn back.

Elliott remarks here, however, that occupational and pre-occupational career cost commitment may be less important than social

commitment based, for example, on the encouragement of parents and later, perhaps, encouragement also from adult friends already in the occupation. Incidentally, the concept of social commitment may help to explain a phenomenon I have noticed, that is a professional student who fails badly in the exams, who does little work and whose studies bring them little pleasure, and yet who persist in the course and firmly reject any advice to change their course. It would appear that one should consider not only depth of commitment to an occupation but different kinds of commitment in assessing professional socialisation.

Finally, Elliott's critique of Becker's use of the concept of commitment is useful in showing that the social compositions of professions is a product on the one hand of individual processes of commitment and on the other the selection and socialisation mechanisms of the professions themselves. It is useful in explaining tensions, for example inadequate professional socialisation where social commitment was weak as shown in Carlin's description of the solo law practitioner from a poor background. (11)

Some further case studies of professional identification, commitment and the development of professional culture will now be considered to show the use of these concepts in research.

## 2. PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION AND CULTURE: SOME CASE STUDIES

In considering professional socialisation the researcher may look both at the development of a professional identity at an individual level, and at the development of a group culture. Many studies in this area concentrate on pre-qualification socialisation in a college rather than socialisation at the work place, and one reason for this may simply be the fact that it is easier to do. Further, it is largely during studentship that the professional personality is formed, later it is more a question of

gentle peer group guidance, as Freidson and Rhea have shown. (12). However, the effect of professional socialisation during studentship should not be overestimated. The student does not come to the college completely innocent; he has his own values which helped to guide him to the career choice in the first place. In this respect the first study considered here, the 'Silent Dialogue' (13) seems to strike the right balance.

'The Silent Dialogue' is an attempt to understand how the nursing profession socialises its recruits. It studies how the student is involved in influencing the events of his own socialisation rather than as a passive recipient of external influences.

The book is about 'becoming'. This is its theme. The aim of the researchers was to scrutinise the student's 'live-in world', using a methodology that involved a high degree of inter-subjectivity. How do students make their choices? What is the meaning to them of their various encounters?

Half the students had fathers who were professional men; a quarter of the mothers had degrees; 80% said that being successful in their chosen careers was important to them and their parents. Few of the parents were divorced; the families could be considered 'locals' rather than 'cosmopolitan'. Many made an early choice for nursing and did not consider other possibilities including the possibility of not succeeding in their chosen career. Other studies have shown that early choice of career, and definiteness as to career choice, correlated with success, thus middle class students have been shown to be inflexible in career choice, while working class students, even when they said they would prefer a high prestige job, will be content with a medium range prestige job. Again, early career choice could be looked upon as a sort of rehearsal for the chosen occupation, a sort of prior socialisation to the chosen occupation.

Finally, many had friends in nursing and felt they would have little difficulty in getting the patients to see them as confident nurses. (It should be emphasised that the research was done in an elite college).

Student success depended on being aware of faculty requirements. Thus the students considered an 'unsafe nurse' was one who was not aware of her errors. It was observed that drop-outs tended to be less authoritarian, less able to curb impulses, and more capable of complex thought. Another line of reasoning is that perhaps the drop-outs were just socially ineffective, or not willing to give up enough of themselves:

'For some drop-outs the protective insulation of student culture was insufficient to shelter them from the costs of becoming. Moreover, some found the costs of these too high for other parts of the self, namely the womanly self. For others, their marginal station outside the circuits of information in student culture did not enable them to learn what studentmanship had to offer and perhaps even more importantly they were unable, by virtue of their isolation, to rehearse what they did learn in front of the right audience, namely their peers'. (14)

The authors used the concept of 'studentmanship' to describe how students sought to get through school with the greatest comfort and least effort while preserving oneself as a person. The two main ploys used by students were 'psyching-out' and 'fronting'.

'Psyching-out': the researchers use this term to mean identifying what the instructor and school considered important. The main difficulty for the student was that the Faculty did not make explicit what was really required - the student had to sense it. This was further complicated by the fact that the Faculty itself had a self-image and it maintained some

distance from the students. In spite of this the research indicated that most students knew when to seek advice, and how to discuss their own feelings about the patient with the instructor. They found that it was the upper middle class girl who was best at psyching-out and she was therefore the more efficient student.

'Fronting' meant doing what the instructor wanted and here, of course, the shrewd student did better than the honest one. While psyching-out meant finding out what the instructor really wanted, fronting meant creating the right impression.

The student might see professional socialisation in terms of self-testing and pacing. The student would be getting to know all the time what was required, both through official and non-official channels, and this would mould her expectations, which then became her own yardstick, by which she measured her performance. In the growing knowledge of role and self (objective and subjective) she was thus confronting one identity predicament with another. She was therefore moving towards higher levels of internalisation and socialisation, leading to the attainment of an identity, which also means greater confidence and independence from the social environment. During this process the top of the cycle of reached when self-evaluated performance comes near to expectations. This process can be seen as the silent dialogue which gives the book its title.

This study will be evaluated after considering another study of professional socialisation, 'Boys in White'.

'Boys in White' is the story of perhaps the longest process of status passage in the world, told from the viewpoint of the socialisees. (15) It was not a longitudinal (or intensive) study, but was based instead on a sample of classes in the Kansas Medical School. The researchers went there with no design and no worked-out hypothesis. Presumably they intended that these should emerge from the data. In this respect one can relate this



study to the principles laid down later in 'The Discovery of Grounded Theory' of which Strauss was a co-author. The aim was to describe the problem: what did medical school do to its students, and how did the students respond?

The key concepts used by the researchers were group perspective and student culture.

In Mead's terms perspective could be seen as co-ordinated views and plans of action. What the researchers were looking for was how these arise in response to group problems.

Firstly they saw that students arrived with a long-range perspective in which the qualified doctor was seen as hard-working, idealistic, not interested in fee, and so on.

As a result of the heavy work load an initial perspective soon developed which could be summarised in the often-repeated phrase 'an effort to learn it all'. Thus in the immediate situation of work overload, the long-range perspective now seemed vague and had to be put aside temporarily. In fact, the theme of the book is that it is the immediate situation which influences conduct. Later, a provisional perspective developed, 'You can't do it all', which involved finding out what the faculty really wanted rather than attempting to learn all medical knowledge. The class slowly became capable of working out a solution to its work overload problem together.

Here one can see in terms of the theme of this essay how group cohesiveness develops through facing and overcoming shared ordeals in the professional socialisation process. It is clear that there is more to becoming a professional than learning technical information. It is a social process involving the learning and use of social skills that will allow the individual to solve problems with the aid of the group. Thus the researchers say that many of the Fraternity men came from similar

professional backgrounds and this latent identity which they brought to the school included a previously learned solution to the work overload problem, something they were able to pass on to the group.

The final perspective was 'what they want us to know'. The groups became distinct and team-like, and hence there was, for example, a dislike of teacher's pet; it was felt that this was an intrusion into the group. Thus the final perspective was a calculative response by the group to the problem of work overload, seeking to know what was required of them and concentrating on just this.

The various perspectives can perhaps be seen as stages in the socialisation process, a series of unofficial ways of beating the system, more available to upper middle class students in medical fraternities than to non-fraternity students.

Turning now to the other main concept used by the researchers, 'student culture'; this can be seen as comprising an organisation of perspectives. It is not something which the student is formally initiated into and then internalises. It is important to emphasise the situational aspect of student culture, and that generally within the interactionist perspective meanings are seen as situational. It arises as a response to a shared problematic situation, and continues from generation to generation, because the problems are similar and because each class enters medical school with similar ideas and objectives. In this respect situation seems to imply structure as well; hence meanings can be related to culture and social groups.

Although Becker and his associates do not see student culture as involving a loss of individual autonomy, this is perhaps questionable. Goffman, for example, appears to believe that personality can only survive by keeping distance. People use various ploys to ensure this; role distance is one; the careful presentation of self is another. This study

however is showing a joint self as emerging in response to a joint problem. (16)

Perhaps some sort of rewards and costs theory could be used in this study to explain how student culture arises. The cost of social interaction may be a loss of self in that you reveal yourself and are hence in a more vulnerable position. There is no interaction in which the parties do not run a big chance of being slightly embarrassed and a slight chance of being greatly embarrassed.

The rewards of social interaction in this case are mutual support in the face of a common problem. But the cost of giving oneself in social interaction is a partial loss or adjustment of one's former personality - in this case a temporary surrender of one's long-range perspectives on the medical profession. The reward, however, is the acquisition of new perspectives to be incorporated in the personality which will help the individual to deal with the common problem in hand.

This analysis could also be applied to the Olesen study, for example, to investigate further the phenomenon of psyching-out and fronting. How deep is the new group culture and the new personality acquired? What are the special problems of isolates and others who are socially ineffective? Are they perhaps people unsure of themselves and therefore unable to chance exposing themselves, so that, in turn, they are unable to be received into the student culture through which they would have learned their identity.

Could it be that the student is reluctant to lose face, to become intimate, and that if it is found that individuals are prepared to risk loss of face, then it is because the anticipated rewards, particularly the lessening of anxiety are greater than the costs. The process of professional socialisation seems to be a particularly good opportunity to study this phenomenon.

### 3. ASSESSMENT OF THE TWO STUDIES

The students in these two studies have common problems and therefore develop common solutions. Neither problems nor solutions get official recognition. The student culture is therefore unofficial, a response of the powerless (the students) faced with a situation of ambiguity and an attempt to deal with an authoritarian system of education. The researchers say very little about the faculty's views on professional socialisation and education, although they do say that from the faculty's viewpoint one of the disadvantages of the student culture is that it may set upper limits to learning. To tell the story purely from the viewpoint of the students may be a fault of both studies, since it prevents a proper assessment being made of power and conflict here, or indeed of the goals of the socialisation process. Indeed it could be argued generally that an interpretive approach tends to overlook consideration of power, for example, the power to impose definitions. It could also be said to be situational and non-structural, although on the other hand as professional socialisation takes place in recurring situations with students of similar social background, structural considerations seem to be built in to these kinds of studies.

The two books can be seen as two different approaches to professional socialisation and professional culture within the symbolic interactionist perspective. Personality is seen as an open system, whose characteristics are determined by social experience, and this is made clear in both books. In 'The Silent Dialogue' one of the key concepts used is that of 'becoming', involving the processes of adjudication and legitimation. In 'Boys in White' the key concepts are 'group perspectives and student culture', which are used to explain the taking of the student role and its effect on personality.

However, although they are both within the symbolic interaction framework, the two books seem to represent two different strands within it.

The study of nursing students seems to owe much to Cooley's concept of the 'looking-glass self' which results from the imagined appraisal of others. In the Becker study the self concept is seen more as the result of the reaction of others and is perhaps more in line with the concept of self which Mead used.

The Olesen study, with its emphasis on the student's existential experience and its refusal to see students as passively internalising a role, comes near to the phenomenological perspective, while the Becker study, with its greater emphasis upon group culture, perspectives and reference group theory, in which the students finally adopt the doctor's perspectives, is really in the main stream of symbolic interactionism. It is as if the student were performing for a succession of audiences, his family, then his school, his college peers and finally his fellow-professionals.

Both studies show that there is more to professionalism than the mere acquisition of technical skills. It is by identification with the group that the individual answers the self-put question, who am I? And again quoting from Hughes:

'It is very common for an occupation to require some symbolic prerequisites. Professional education is not merely the learning of skills. It is also an initiation into a lodge; a semi-secret society of people who have cryptic signs and particular problems. One cannot think of educating people for any profession in purely technical terms. It must be part initiation into a role with its moods, into understanding its basic ethic - I do not mean its specific rules but a basic moving spirit that controls what people do'. (17)

Olesen and Whitaker see professional socialisation as the learning

of a new common-sense world rather than purely in terms of attachment to a group, or as Hughes says:

'... the learning of the medical role consists of a separation, almost an alienation, of the student from the lay medical world, a passage through the mirror so that one looks out on the world from behind it and seeing things as in mirror writing'. (18)

While the Olesen study stresses the subjective aspects of professional socialisation, the Becker study seems to be showing that the question 'who am I?' is answered in terms of the names and categories current in the groups in which members are participating. By applying these labels to themselves, students learn who they are and how they ought to behave and acquire a self and a set of perspectives in terms of which their conduct is shaped. Thus the Olesen study with its use of such concepts as 'psyching' and 'fronting' could perhaps be seen in Goffman-like terms - how we become able to trust our face to someone else; while the Becker study with its emphasis on the acquisition of an identity and a culture seems to be more in the main stream of symbolic interaction.

Methodologically, it will be seen that in both studies the researchers approached the data as innocents, without applying formal theory and without even formulating hypotheses. They were using the data to generate hypotheses and using the techniques suggested by Glazer and Strauss in 'The Discovery of Grounded Theory', that is to say they were developing substantive theory from the particular data they were studying and from which formal theory could be developed.

In 'Boys in White' the researchers counted the number of times a perspective was expressed and they looked for the intensity and prevalence of expressions, avoiding hypotheses when observing. This seems to have been a fault resulting in many of their findings being trite. Of course,

one expects the work in a medical school to be hard. The researchers here avoided the use of questionnaires which could have tested their observations and led on to new and deeper findings. On the other hand their picture of students playing the student role as developed within the student culture and the temporary suspension of the professional role till near the end of the course is an interesting finding. As in 'The Silent Dialogue' it was the socially efficient student who was most competent at playing the student role, a role which emerged in response to a situational difficulty, work overload - hence again showing that ability and competence may be largely social things.

Their use of the concept of perspectives is also interesting. Perspectives here are elements of the student culture, and they are seen as more encompassing than attitudes or values. They arose in response to the situational problem of work overload, and the researchers used it to discover which type of student was quickest in adopting the appropriate perspectives, from which in turn they could classify students in terms of social background, again distinguishing the able from the less able. Much of the criticism of 'Boys in White' seems applicable also to 'The Silent Dialogue'. In particular the refusal to apply hypotheses to the data and to link their findings to other research seems to be an unnecessary restraint, even if one is committed to a grounded theory approach.

It is interesting to compare 'Boys in White' representative of the type of approach to professional socialisation that stresses situational meanings in defining role and culture and which uses participant observation as its main investigating tool, with 'The Student Physician'. (19)

In 'The Student Physician' professional socialisation is seen as a more formal process. It is not that role and culture arise in response to situational pressure. Rather the role is one provided by the profession itself, and as the student progresses so he comes nearer to the ideal pro-

professional role. Thus Merton is adopting an institutional approach to role, which he sees here as being provided by the professional culture, while Becker is adopting an interactionist approach to role, seeing it as arising from the situations of the actors. In 'The Student Physician' the researchers used more formal methods, for example, a greater use of questionnaires. They also tried to establish what the values of the staff were, and how far students progressed towards this during the period of professional socialisation at medical school. Professional culture was thus seen as a system of norms which the student learnt to accept and internalise. One problem the researchers saw was that each norm had an inconsistent co-ordinate norm, so that medical education was seen as a blending of these potentially incompatible norms into a consistent whole. For example, the professional model required the physician to blend autonomy with humility; to be emotionally detached and yet not callous; to collaborate with colleagues yet take final responsibility for decisions. Thus professional socialisation can be seen as progress towards this ability to blend incompatible norms.

Most studies in professional socialisation adopt the more formal approach used by Merton and his associates, seeing the process largely in terms of status passage, of undergoing a shared institutionalised ordeal from which a new professional self and a professional culture will emerge.

The criticism that could be made of Merton's study and similar studies is that it is over-deterministic. It assumes that the students come to the college to be socialised, that they are passive receptacles into which the values are introduced, and that there is a definite professional role which the student can 'internalise'.

Conversely the criticism that could be made of the approach adopted in 'Boys in White' and 'The Silent Dialogue' is that it underestimates the structural elements in professional socialisation. They are situation-



ally specific. They refer, for example, to the methods used by students under stress to solve their immediate problems like work overload and psyching-out. Thus when Becker refers to culture he talks of perspectives which arise in response to problems; their meanings can be grasped by understanding the actors' situation (hence the importance of participant observation as a method of research here).

Of the two approaches, the interpretive interactionist approach of Becker and Olesen is preferred here (and that is why most of the space has been devoted to them). Methodologically, it seems right to ask students informally about their work problems and what they feel about their course, and to explore their world as a participant observer, insofar as this is possible. Thus by the time the interpretive researcher comes to administer his formal questionnaire he not only know what questions to ask but should know intuitively the likely answers (although some researchers dispense with a questionnaire altogether because of language problems etc). The criticism that these studies are situationally specific could be overcome by showing that these situations are recurrent, that professional socialisation for example takes place in similar circumstances, thus introducing structural elements like professional culture.

A final word on professional socialisation here. One should beware of overestimating the importance of professional socialisation. Professions do tend to attract recruits from certain strata of society and there is a high degree of self-selection, so that students come pre-socialised. Perhaps the most important thing that happens at college is that the student becomes technically competent. On the other hand the argument that competence is very much a social thing is persuasive. In the next section an account is given of Elliott's attempt to solve some of these problems.

#### 4. ROLE SOCIALISATION AND STATUS SOCIALISATION

Philip Elliott enters a few caveats regarding professional socialisation

which seem relevant to the two studies now under consideration. (20)

He points out that most studies of professional socialisation are situationally specific, and he also warns against extending explanations of socialisation in total institutions to other types of socialisation.

'Total professions' like medicine do their socialisation in total institutions. Thus the socialisation of a doctor may not be comparable to that of an accountant (although it may be interesting to look for similarities). As already shown, there is a danger in overstating the change involved in professional socialisation. We are, after all, only dealing with secondary socialisation here; at the most only a sub-world is internalised, in contrast to the massive universe that is internalised during primary socialisation. Indeed, socialisation could be seen as learning what one is already as well as learning to become some future self. In addition, the students' status of origin tends to be similar to the status to which they aspire.

It is clear that some professions require greater commitment than others, and will therefore tend to socialise recruits in total institutions. Further, some recruits will be more eager because of previous socialisation, to become more completely socialised. Here Elliott makes the useful distinction between role socialisation and status socialisation:

<u>Role Socialisation</u>	<u>Status Socialisation</u>
Training for a future role	Acquiring a more general social identity acceptable to people in the future status position
Utilitarian Contract	Normative Contract
Going to college for future rewards	Accepting the broader aims of what the college stands for.

It may be useful to apply this schema to the two studies. One would, of course, expect the socialisation for a physician to be akin to status socialisation and this is what seems to emerge from the Becker studies.

However, nursing, being what Etzioni calls a semi-profession, would seem to require only role socialisation (although the way it is described in 'The Silent Dialogue' it seems to come near to status socialisation; perhaps this is because an elite college was being considered). Of course it might be argued that some semi-professions, because they are not sure of their status, take steps to inculcate in their socialisees a sense of status.

It may be interesting to apply Elliott's schema to individuals, to distinguish the natural professional from the man who has to be trained. In this way one could distinguish the fraternity man at Kansas from the 'independent'. The former had a more professional background and knew almost instinctively what was required; it could be speculated that he was destined to fill the higher echelons of the profession. In a similar way, Oswald Hall contrasts the different career paths of the Yankee elite doctor, with that of the Armenian immigrant doctor. The former was naturally at home with his status as a doctor. (21) Again, Smigel's Wall Street lawyer was socialised earlier for his future professional role than Carlin's solo lawyer, who was often the son of an immigrant. For the latter, the lawyer's role was sought in order to symbolise that he had arrived.

In all these instances the professional socialisation of the 'natural' professional can be seen as learning what one is already, in other words, status socialisation.

In contrast, the man who is not at home as a professional can be likened to Richard Hoggart's 'scholarship boy', (22), always dependent on the approving nods of his teachers and employers and doomed to be mediocre, working hard to achieve even that. However, perhaps the picture is overdrawn. Men from humble backgrounds do often achieve success in their professions, through sheer ability. Nevertheless, the social aspects

of ability do seem important, it would be a mistake to analyse competence, especially professional, in purely psychological terms, and many studies in professional socialisation do look on competence as a social accomplishment hence, for example, Olesen's stress on 'psyching-out' and 'fronting'.

## CONCLUSIONS

The discussion here helps to deal with the questions, what methodology, concepts, and models are most useful in research into professional socialisation and how can socialisation be linked to the study of professional ideology and power.

The methodology that has been used in most of the studies outlined here comes within the interpretive school and involves participant observation in some form by the researchers. This method is useful in examining some of the key concepts in professional socialisation; the professional role, the professional culture, commitment, investment, and so on. It shows how meanings and definitions arise in recurrent situations such as occur during professional socialisation, and roles become defined during interaction. However it does seem that sometimes researchers like Merton overestimate the effects of professional socialisation and the importance of culture. There is a considerable amount of anticipatory socialisation of professional students and perhaps further investigation may show that there may be little change in students during their training.

Merton is one analyst who stresses the institutional aspects of role. He argues that it is through learning the institutionally prescribed role that the individual is linked to institutions like professional associations and that learning the professional role minimises the need for 'private' decisions and adjustments in conflict situations.

While Merton speaks of learning an occupational role, Becker talks

of acquiring a professional identity. Clearly, learning a role affects the individual's personality and it is this process which has been described here, mainly in symbolic interactionist terms, as secondary socialisation in which an individual acquires a new self or at least a modified one. Some professions require greater modification than others. Dornbush's description of the military academy shows how great that requirement may be. (23). Not all professions require this degree of commitment but by taking the military academy or the religious seminary as an ideal type, one can perhaps perceive the essence of professional socialisation, how role learning, commitment, the internalising of a professional culture, and the creation of a new personality take place. As Hughes has remarked:

'This cutting off of the person from his home base simultaneously with his entrance into an occupation, with his change from one occupation to another or even one job to another, is that characteristic phenomenon of the modern division of labour which carries with it personality change. The change is ordinarily more casual than the change from layman to priest or from Pole to American'. (24)

By positively participating in the socialisation process the recruit to a profession internalises its ideals, or perhaps we should say its ideology. He forms attachments towards his fellow students through the support they render to each other. Thus, as Becker shows, they feel committed to their profession. They have invested emotional and intellectual energy during this socialisation process. To endanger one's professional standing by not identifying with the profession and accepting its ideology would put at risk this personal investment. Hence control by a profession of its members is largely a question of internalised rather than formal or even peer group control. Further, this acceptance of the

professional ideology gives the group internal cohesiveness and the power that comes from knowing what your ideals are when facing the world as an individual professional man. Here one can see clearly the link between socialisation, ideology and power, a connection that will be discussed again in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER V

### PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES :

#### THE LINK BETWEEN INTERNAL CONTROL OVER ITS MEMBERS

#### AND THE POWER OF A PROFESSION IN SOCIETY

##### 1. INTRODUCTION

In examining the nature of the professions two basic issues have been considered; firstly the power of the professions in society and secondly the power of the professions over their own members, that is to say the power to mobilise resources. The intention in this chapter is to look at these issues, and at the level of ideas and values.

Here the questions that will be asked are: What are the ideologies of various professions? How did they develop and how are they identified? What hold do they have on individual members? How does a profession seek to influence societal values?

In discussing occupational ideologies Caplow says that it is by consensus and by the sharing of attitudes that occupational groups on a large scale become sociologically meaningful. These common values are not limited to the work situation but affect other areas of human activity. Thus each profession will share common attitudes on the evaluation of its own status and the definition of its work. It will have a common definition of the public and of competing professions. Caplow argues that the world of the professional is a tight enclosure and that the development of common attitudes is reinforced at many points, for example, by the distinctions made between professional and layman, by the period of socialisation to the profession, and by the informal association out of working hours which is tacitly required.<sup>(1)</sup> Graeme Salaman in his discussion of occupational communities shows how the cohesiveness of architects as a group affects work and non-work situations:

'It is clear that to see oneself as an architect carried a certain conception of oneself and others in the occupation as people with specific qualities and attributes. The architects felt that certain qualities were necessary to carry out the work tasks satisfactorily and that it was the possession of these qualities which differentiated the architect from members of other occupations. Over three-quarters (77 percent) of the architects felt that members of their profession differed from outsiders by virtue of their interest and capacity for design. Whatever their criteria of good design - and these varied considerably - the architects stressed their interest in the way things are designed, and they mentioned how this interest was not restricted to their work alone, but permeated their perception of things generally'. (2)

It is as if the desired professional qualities of an architect, the ability to design, becomes an ideology, marking off the architect from the rest of the world and ensuring group cohesiveness.

An important aspect of this group cohesiveness is that in giving members a sense of identity it enables them as a group to differentiate themselves from other professional groups. As Caplow puts it:

'Each of the major professions tends to award itself a higher status than outsiders would be willing to concede and to underestimate its relative rewards. Of course, disproportions between the relative prestige and the relative earnings of a professional group may exist, but the degree of disproportion is



invariably exaggerated. This mild paranoia serves as a constant support for the militancy of professional organisations in promoting their economic interests'. (3)

However, because of this 'particularisation' the professions as such do not form a class in society (an argument developed by C. Wright Mills in 'White Collar'), and Caplow goes on to note:

'A similar mechanism prevents the various professions from forming a single class. It is chiefly in comparison with other professions that each professional group exaggerates its own importance and deprecates its own rewards, so that interprofessional co-operation is sporadic at best. The few studies of interprofessional attitudes show unexpectedly great social distance between professional groups of similar status'. (4)

As was shown earlier when discussing a profession's power over its own members, it is largely through socialisation that the member identifies with the profession and thereby exercises internal control over his thoughts and actions, so as to conform with the ideology of the profession. It was shown that studies in professional socialisation tend to emphasise how the recruit gains a professional identity and internalises an ideology. In this chapter the emphasis will be more on work group control and how the work group or profession faces the world and attempts to persuade it to accept its definitions. The common theme is professional ideology; its development and its power.

## 2. PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES IN THE WORK SETTING

Professional ideology has a basis in everyday work experience, argues Philip Elliott, who says that these ideologies face both inward and outward(5) they are both 'parochial' and 'ecumenic'. The parochial aspect can be seen in the limited way members of any profession approach their work and

generally avoid wider social issues. In contrast, the ecumenic aspect is founded on the need of professional groups to address others with different, perhaps competing, interests, and Elliott goes on to say:

'Mannheim's attempt to extend Marx's concept of ideology to show that all knowledge and belief is related to the situation of its production, should not be allowed to obscure the various different mechanisms involved. Professional ideologies result from the need to make sense of recurrent work problems and tasks within a particular organisation and career setting, and of the need to present the work to others in the community, to compete for attention, control and resources'. (8)

Other writers have also shown the importance of the work situation in determining consciousness at a more general level. What Elliott aims to show here is how professional ideologies are linked to the occupational situations of different groups, in this case three broad ideologies held by doctors and scientists working in cancer research and treatment; those in the hospital held a therapy ideology, emphasising immediate responsibility to find the best treatment for patients already admitted to hospital. The science ideology was a belief that progress was only possible through fundamental research. The early diagnosis ideology stressed the returns to be expected from increased public education and awareness.

The consultant radiotherapists shared a therapy ideology, stressing the importance of clinical research and patient care in improving the cure rate, and playing down the role of fundamental research, which was seen as being concerned with cells and animals.

Against this, the scientists stressed the universalistic requirements of the scientific role, that only basic research aimed at investigating

the processes of life itself could be expected to lead to an advance in cancer treatment. The basic science ideology seemed to imply a contrast between a real cure, which might be discovered through scientific research, and current treatment techniques, which were little more than different ways of excising diseased organs.

The early diagnosis ideology stressed education/prevention campaigns. It was more clearly directed towards the public than the other two, thus the therapy ideology could be seen as being rather narrow, while the science ideology seemed to be based on the scientist performing for a scientific community.

These ideologies can be related to particular organisational settings and particular intellectual traditions. They further influence the way resources are allocated, and 'at all levels play a part in restraining and ordering processes of social change by structuring the way the issues are presented and relating them to these continuing patterns and traditions'.

Elliott himself uses this study to contrast the medical particularism, based on the doctors' concern for their patients as individuals, with scientific universalism, reflecting the scientists' interests in the general advance of knowledge. The therapy ideology of the doctors and the basic science ideology of scientists can be seen as giving support to their respective roles. The doctors' ideology stresses the progress that can be made within a particular field of known techniques to suit individual cases, while the scientists see advances in basic scientific knowledge as a necessary condition of progress in cancer treatment.

Many of the points made by Elliott are borne out by Strauss and his colleagues in their study of psychiatric ideologies in institutions. (7) They sought to show how these ideologies coincided with occupational boundaries and how they affected treatment, the distribution of resources, and so on.

Although the word 'ideology' is sometimes used in polemics to debunk the view of opponents, to show up the unproven aspects of belief, and to prove they are based on selfish interests, the term is used by Strauss in this study to show the nature of collective ideas in a profession. The three main positions representing three kinds of treatment were the physical, the psychological and thirdly and least established, the social. The associated ideologies could be described as:

- (a) the somatic ideology, whose emphasis is on organic treatment;
- (b) the psychotherapeutic ideology, which is the psycho-analytic position;
- (c) milieu therapy, which stresses the importance of environmental factors in the treatment.

The researchers came to the conclusion that the social structure of a hospital depends on the type of professionals who work there; their ideologies and the relationship to the outside community.

Professionals, they say, are staking out claims to share the treatment, for example, in a milieu type of therapy, social workers and psychologists have assumed ideological leadership and make the decision on the psychotherapy required. There is no awe of psychiatrists and, for example, at the institution there is no psychiatric nursing.

Ideology makes a difference in the organisation of treatment: in what is done for patients and the accompanying division of labour. Professional affiliation strongly influences the professional's ideological position. For example, social workers and psychologists were both high scorers on the sociotherapeutic scale and low on the somatic scale. Nurses, on the other hand, seemed to show a lack of ideological consistency, and no firm ideological position.

It is argued that ideological convictions generate their own morality and they provide the framework within which to judge treatments. These judgements have moral overtones. Thus when psychotherapists resorted to ECT they were very careful to justify it, for the somaticists' moral considerations revolved around the time and money and anguish of patients. They believed the psychotherapists were often indifferent to this and accused them of exhausting family resources without alleviating the patients' conditions.

What the study shows is that there are clearly different ideologies (as defined at the beginning of this chapter), that these ideologies are related to different occupations and different types of treatment. Furthermore, there are different views on the morality of using different treatment so that, for example, group therapists would consider the use of ECT as immoral. Thus, when the professional asks himself 'what am I doing useful and is it right?' his answer will be based on his profession's claim to expertise, which can be seen largely as its ideology. Differing ideologies affect the interpretation of situations. The authors conclude that we should look at professional ideologies rather than organisational ladders for our explanation of treatment and career progress in hospitals, and how professionals pursuing different careers work together in an organisation. 'One cannot understand what is happening to hospitals without an informed systematic focus on them as locales for the pursuit of professional purposes'. (8)

Unfortunately, this study is rather verbose, obscure in some parts and labouring the obvious in others. However, like the Elliott study of cancer work, it is useful in showing, among other things, how the ideology helps the professional to make sense of what he is doing and how he justifies his work.

The next section deals more specifically with a conflict of ideologies.

### 3. EMERGING PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES: A STUDY

The studies in professional ideology discussed so far involved mainly an equilibrium model, where the area of influence is already mapped out, claims have been staked and the chief concern of the various professional groups is 'boundary maintenance'. What happens when new professions are trying to define their positions, often in the face of competing groups?

Pettigrew looks at the conflicting ideologies of two emerging professional groups, computer programmers and systems analysts. (9) He shows that attempts at conceptualising professions in the past have met with difficulties, and thinks that a grounded theory approach viewing specialisation as an emergent process is more promising. He asks how does a specialist group define a task and how does it protect its identity by the development of an ideology?

A developing speciality is poorly institutionalised. Its systems of role relationships, norms and sanctions is poorly defined. Its status is not fully accredited. A more established group may accuse it of incompetence and may invoke a set of fictions about its own expertise, and so a battle of ideologies may develop.

In a longitudinal study, Pettigrew looked at the effects of the declining status of computer programmers compared with systems analysts: the closer the analysts get to the computer, the less need there is for the programmers. When programmers came to the study firm, they caused a cultural shock. Later on a new organisation and methods department was set up in which analysts could redefine the system of work in user departments for the computer. Thus was the first encroachment on the programmers' territory. In the ensuing conflict the programmers were surer of their occupational identity:

'In the particular locale of Brian Michaels, they had been the first to carve out their area of expertise. They were able to sustain this early definition of their proper field of activities because of their control over computer technology. The programmers' power was bolstered by a value system which defined issues in technical terms and required solutions of an equally technically specific nature. Designing and programming a computer system was a mathematical problem which, of course, could only be handled by trained mathematicians.

To the analysts, the Achilles heel of the programmers was their lack of knowledge of, and interest in, company business systems. This had implications at the system design and implementation phases of the computer system. The analysts, backed by the company management and the user departments, tried to define their proper field of activities in those two areas. By the end of 1961 they had been fairly successful at the implementation phase but had done no real work in system design. They too had a value system. As the weaker group, this was often phrased to differentiate themselves from the programmers and to explain what they had to offer. A question from an interview with one analyst offers a good example:

'The programming characters are completely different from us. They knew a lot about maths, and how to handle the first generation 'beasts'. They hadn't the faintest idea of the commercial work involved. There were the people who couldn't speak the commercial language and us who knew a bit about programming and local systems.

in detail. There was therefore a programme of mutual education'. (10)

In other words, the speaker was staking claim to his area of expertise, the ability to speak the commercial language and denigrating the expertise of the programmers. With the arrival of newer machines requiring less expertise the analysts' position became stronger, their main role being to translate departmental needs into computer language.

To protect their position the programmers used four main strategies: firstly, norms which denied outsiders' competence, so that a programmer might say, for example, that analysts did not know what they wanted anyway.

Secondly, there was the generation of myths to provide themselves with a comforting self-image, a tactic which professions generally seem to adopt, especially when threatened. Here the programmers sought to show they were especially well qualified.

The third strategy was withholding information, thereby gaining power. The adoption of the norms of secrecy is commonly used by a group unsure of itself. The aim is to keep the area under control free from outside interference and to make the analysis dependent on them.

Finally, they sought to protect their knowledge base through stringent training requirements, by protecting their area of expertise and preventing it from becoming routinised.

Pettigrew views this process as the establishment of a mandate in contrast to the established professional groups with their codes of ethics and clear lines of demarcation. Here the occupational boundaries were not clearly marked. Further, the conflict between the two groups was heightened by technological changes; each new computer introduced affected the distribution of power, frequently favouring the analyst by reducing the importance of the programmers' expertise. The study of occupational specialisation as



an emergent process enables the researcher to see more clearly how ideologies evolve and their use as a group resource.

#### 4. PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES AND SOCIETY

##### THE ABILITY OF PROFESSIONS TO INFLUENCE SOCIETAL VALUES

So far the question of professional ideologies has been considered mainly in what Elliott calls parochial terms, how professions face each other and clients. (11) This section and the next one consider the ecumenic aspect: how professions face the world and seek to convince the public at large that their way of seeing things is sensible. More particularly, how do the values attached to particular types of professional work affect the standing of that profession? 'Instead of dwelling on values of such generality that they have doubtful analysis unity for understanding the quality of professional self-regulation, sociologists should determine the specific values attached to different types of professional work'. (12)

Freidson argues that it is the task of a profession to persuade the state and the public in general to accept the values of the profession. One way in which this is done is through the profession's control over resources. If the public wants what the profession has to offer then it must accept the profession's definitions. This could be seen in terms of an exchange theory of power. Thus, a profession's ability to raise the value of what it has to offer depends on its ability to influence the value system of society and its power to withhold resources, thereby increasing their scarcity and value. Here one could ask 'can a profession really impose its definitions on society, if so, how?'

Perhaps Ivan Waddington's assessment of the development of the French medical profession may help to suggest answers to these problems. (13) Waddington's article is a sociological analysis of the development of the Paris Hospital System, bearing in mind that in the nineteenth century, French medicine was really Hospital Medicine. He shows firstly that in the

eighteenth century, the doctor/patient relationship was one of patronage; the client defined his needs and the manner in which they were to be met. But since most clients were ill-informed, the doctor played the role of lackey and comforter. There was thus maximum client control coupled with a minimum of technically based authority. Because doctors were not evaluated on technical performance there was little incentive to engage in research.

With the establishment of the formal Paris Hospital System in the Revolutionary Period, there came a shift in medical practice, from observation to examination of patients. Access to the body is privileged, says Parsons; within the hospital setting it became institutionalised.

All this resulted in a more scientific approach to medicine. But, perhaps even more important, the relative status of the doctor was raised. The patient could no longer define his requirements. The doctor was not constrained to find quick cures but instead could suspend judgement pending scientific analysis.

What Waddington is describing is a change in the power and status of the doctor from a gentleman's gentleman to a respected authority figure given the privilege of access to the body. Here it could be argued that after the Revolution the change in the value system of society created favourable conditions for the emergence of a new ideology in the medical profession, which would be acknowledged by clients and the public generally. The enlightenmen emphasised the importance of science at the expense of tradition: thus society's new stress on the importance of scientific medicine resulted in an increase in the status of the doctor and it is from this that his power derived, a power to control access to resources and to affect societal values, thus enabling him to carry on his work against a background of favourable definitions. Thus it is society through its value system that bestows high status on occupational groups. Because of their

high status these groups are powerful and will naturally attract recruits from the higher strata of society, so ensuring perpetuation of their position.

It could thus be argued that since the importance of professional expertise depends largely on societal values, this expertise could perhaps be seen in terms of the sociology of knowledge (as will be argued in the next section). To gauge a profession's power one could ask:

(i) What does the profession say is knowledge or expertise?

(ii) What does society say is knowledge?

The closer the link between (i) and (ii) the greater the power of that profession. Of course, professions will work hard to bring about this desirable state of affairs. Sometimes this happens 'naturally', through a shift in societal values, as in the case of the French doctor just described. But often it means persuading powerful groups in society, including the institutions of government, to accept their definitions and values. One way in which this may be done is through a profession's power to influence government, as has been discussed earlier (when the influence of the BMA on the drafting of the National Health Service Act was examined). Another method is through the way a profession is able to present and control its expertise and this will be considered next.

In Chapter II an examination was made of the power of professional expertise and how in particular professions are able to influence governments (for example, how the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors affected the Rent Act 1957). Here it is suggested that instead of looking at professional expertise in purely technical terms, it could also be seen as an aspect of professional ideology.

The professions have skills to offer which are important to industrial society and therefore they have considerable power in the market place. Further, because these skills are scarce and not easily substitutable, each

profession is in a semi-monopoly position, so that by withholding or rationing its supply of skills, it can increase their price. Because their skills are considered vital to industrial society the professions may also acquire political power, which may be seen as power to influence government, as discussed earlier, and to gain advantages over competitors. However, there is no necessary link between functional and political power, as was shown.

In looking at the functional power of a profession one should first beware of accepting the importance of professional skills at their face value. Firstly the scarcity and hence high value of the expertise may arise from the fact that the profession is in a strong position to restrict entry. This has been referred to earlier when examining the profession's control over recruitment and socialisation. Secondly, the profession's expertise can also be kept scarce and valuable by its power to patrol the boundaries of its work, to keep away competitors, as shown in Pettigrew's study of computer work. In research one could perhaps look for a correlation between professional status and successful boundary maintenance, and this in turn may yield some index of professional power. Hughes has suggested some leads which could be followed up when he says that 'the physician is quite willing to give up a number of tasks so long as he does not weaken his essential role in the system. He passes on anything that does not threaten his role. One may therefore look at the division of labour in two ways; as a series of specific tasks or as a set of roles played in a drama. Part of the problem of any modern profession is to preserve its role while at the same time letting its boundaries so shift as to make the organisation work well'.

(14)

Again there may be what Elliott Freidson calls a hierarchy of institutionalised expertise so that in the field of health, for example, the only truly autonomous occupation is medicine itself. Freidson says that:

'There is a critically significant difference between dominant professions and those others that claim the name but do not possess the status ... In essence the difference reflects the existence of a hierarchy of institutionalised expertise. That hierarchy of expertise which is almost as definite as the hierarchy of office ... can have the same effect on the experience of the client as bureaucracy is said to have'. (15)

It must be stressed that professional expertise is not merely a technical thing but is closely connected with status and ideology. A profession will try to sell its ideals to the public thereby gaining the status from which power flows. These ideals will tend to exaggerate professional expertise.

Elliott Freidson says professional values comprise the ideals of knowledge and service; the ideals of professional occupation and career; and those relating to the nature of professional work. The ideals must be connected to the occupation that defines and organises the work.

'Students do not merely want to heal, to serve justice or to transmit knowledge to the young; they want to become doctors, lawyers, or teachers'. (16)

According to Freidson, professionalism defines the nature of professional work:

'to be extraordinarily complex and non-routine, requiring for its adequate performance extensive training, great intelligence and skill and highly complex judgement that cannot be evaluated by any straightforward and definite rules'. (17)

This belief underlines the profession's claim to autonomy in judging its work.

Thus professions may work to persuade their clients, the public at

large, and indeed themselves, that their expertise is vital. The public may already accept this due to the high prestige of the profession, its control over vital resources, the high prestige of the status group from which the profession draws its recruits, and of course its possession of specific knowledge. A profession's ability to influence the public depends on its prestige, yet its prestige may depend on its ability to persuade the public and the client that its expertise is important. Clearly this depends on the fit between societal values and particular professional ideologies; the examples given in this chapter are intended to demonstrate this.

### CONCLUSIONS

On the evidence set out in this chapter the following propositions could be put forward:

- (i) Every profession seems to develop an ideology about its work and its place in society;
- (ii) These professional ideologies may be seen largely in terms of the discussion at the beginning of this chapter. Group beliefs contain some truth in them, although this is often exaggerated. For example, the architect's emphasis on creativity, the surveyor's practicality, the accountant's attention to detail, all these qualities may be necessary, but the professional tends to over-emphasise them to the extent that belief in them becomes an ideology;
- (iii) These ideologies may arise during training and in the work situations in the manner discussed in this chapter and in the chapter on socialisation. It is considered that Berger is largely correct when he says that the minimum function of an occupational ideology is to enhance the importance of that occupation and its maximum function is to produce a favourable societal definition; (18)
- (iv) The ability of a profession to gain recognition for its ideologies depends on societal values, and Waddington's study of the French

doctor has shown how a change in societal values affects a profession's fortunes; (19)

- (v) A profession does not usually seek to influence societal values directly but instead indulges in boundary maintenance, defining the area of its work and fending off intruders (as shown in Pettigrew's study of computer programmers and systems analysts) (20) On the other hand, although professions seem to build walls around themselves, they cannot be socially isolated; a doctor cannot practice without resources; a librarian cannot function without a library. The professional ideology is one instrument that can be used to obtain a favourable allocation of resources;
- (vi) Whilst there is no necessary connection between the strength of a professional ideology and the power and prestige of that profession, it would seem that it is the professional ideology which gives a profession its cohesiveness and its ability to maintain and, if desired, to extend its boundaries, and that the higher professions have the stronger ideologies and cohesiveness. Perhaps this is due to the length of the socialisation period, entailing a greater commitment and investment (in Becker's terms) by individuals. This in turn could be related to the fact that recruits are drawn from higher social strata;
- (vii) As was shown in Chapter III, the stronger the group's ideology and cohesiveness, the less need there is for formal control, so that the absence of a colleague's smile may cause pain, or, in Freidson and Rhea's example, a talking-to is considered severe punishment; (21)
- (viii) Thus the practitioner should subscribe to the professional ideology for his own peace of mind (to avoid the pain of rebelling against previous socialisation) and not to let his colleagues down since his rebellion also means a

questioning of their ideals and in addition threatens the cohesiveness of the group;

(ix) From the foregoing it could be concluded that professional expertise is not solely or even mainly a technical thing. It seems to be to a large extent a matter of ideology, especially if one is prepared to accept, on the evidence set out here, the following points:

- (a) the power and prestige of a profession depends largely on the extent to which its ideology is accepted in a society;
- (b) if a profession's ideology is acceptable to important clients then it will have control over resources and treatment as shown in the example here of mental hospitals;
- (c) expertise is what a profession (not the client) says is expertise in accordance with its ideology so that a cure is what the medical profession says is a cure.

The following chapter attempts to link professional power, ideology and socialisation in assessing the place of the professions in society.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE PLACE OF THE PROFESSIONS IN SOCIETY

#### SOME CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this essay four key and interlinked aspects of the sociology of the professions have been discussed:

1. the power of professions in society, that is the external power of the professions;
2. the power of professions to control their own members; the internal power of the professions;
3. the socialisation of individuals which may be regarded as a special category of the internal power of professions;
4. professional ideology, which it is argued here firstly functions as a link between the individual and his profession and secondly as the claim to special power through which a profession safeguards its position in society.

This chapter seeks to summarise these aspects of the sociology of the professions and to show how they can be brought together in order to arrive at an understanding of the professions and their place in society.

#### 1. THE POWER OF PROFESSIONS IN SOCIETY

Professions seldom seek to change society. The political power of the established professions is basically a force for conservatism, a preservation of the status quo. Professions seek to define and defend the boundaries of their work, as Pettigrew in his study of the competition between computer programmers and systems analysts shows. When societal values change, the affected professions may strongly resist and even modify these changes, as the example of the BMA's influence on the

drafting of the National Health Service Act 1946 has indicated. When a profession changes substantially it is usually as a result of changes in societal values, as occurred in the scientific development of French medicine as a result of the Revolution.

Thus it appears that the professions are not a political force in society in the usual sense of the term. Can they then be regarded as a social class? Lewis and Maude argue that professionalism represents the epitome of middle class values, devotion to the work task, deferred gratification, the desire for independence, and so on. The authors are particularly fearful of the growing bureaucratisation of the professions, mainly as a result of the expansion of government into the private sector. (1)

There are, however, two arguments against seeing the professions mainly in class terms. Firstly, Mills in his classic work on middle class alienation, has argued that the professions are not one class, but many, each with competing ideologies to legitimate their positions. (2) In power terms they face each other rather than society as a whole, and as such should be analysed in terms of fragmentation and depoliticisation, and perhaps one could add as an aspect of false consciousness, in that the professional ideologies, particularly in the case of the lesser professions, may prevent professionals from appreciating their true class position.

Secondly, rather than seeing the professions as a force for mobilising middle class power, Oppenheimer points to the proletarianisation of the professions due to the fragmentation of work, collectivisation and lack of control over the work product, partly as a result of increasing bureaucratisation. (3) Against this, Friedson has argued that professions are able to maintain their power through the acceptance of their ideologies, which in turn prevents their knowledge from becoming rationalised.

Johnson seeks to transcend these arguments by showing that professions fulfil the global functions of capital (although without owning the means of production) by facilitating control and surveillance. (4) Thus, for example, accountancy can, through its ideology, preserve its professional position and yet also serve the needs of capital so that modern accountancy can be seen as a creature of corporate business.

On the question of bureaucratic control generally one should beware of underestimating the resilience of the professions. Freidson's thesis is plausible. Bureaucratisation may continue, a corporatist economic system may be developing, but this does not imply the demise of professionalism or professional power in society. The power of bureaucracies vis-a-vis professions depends on their ability to break down work tasks so that less training is required. But there is greater formal education now, so that we are entering what Freidson has called the 'knowledgeable society' and it is knowledge that determines the work task, not managerial prerogative. In passing from the entrepreneurial practitioner to employee the professional may have lost some control over his working conditions but he has not lost control of the content of the work. (5)

Perhaps by way of tentative conclusion here one could say firstly that professional power should be seen mainly in terms of infighting to defend boundaries of work. The maintenance of these boundaries may be against other encroaching professions, as the examples quoted have shown. It may also require pressure on government. Freidson has argued that the maintenance of a profession's position requires continuous political activity. (6) No matter how concerned with humanity it may be, a profession must become an interest group. Secondly, it could be argued that the differential rewards accruing to different professions should be analysed in the context of the sociology of education, that is those in the higher classes get better 'A' levels and go on to higher professions so that admission to

a profession is still by status, as it was in the case of the nineteenth century professional gentleman, and that the power of a profession depends partly on the power and status of the strata of society from which its elite is recruited. Finally, increasing bureaucratisation does not mean a decline in the power of the professions. An industrial society is a bureaucratising society; it is also a professionalising one.

## 2. THE POWER BASE OF THE PROFESSIONS

Part of the power of a profession is its ability to mobilise its resources in order to maintain its position in society. It consists of the willingness of members to form a cohesive group to this end. Professionalism, as Johnson has argued, is one way of achieving occupational organisation. (7) Where this fails, a profession may organise in time as a trade union, as Tunstall has shown in his account of the development of the National Union of Journalists. (8) One mechanism through which a profession exercises control is selection and recruitment procedures, for example 'A' level requirements; that is patrolling the entrance gates. The control of a professional elite is another important aspect of internal power. Thompson has shown that even though the Church has allowed the basis of recruitment to change substantially (a response to the changing position in society), control by an episcopal elite has ensured values and internal power have remained. (9)

Peer group control also ensures conformity and, as Freidson and Rhea have shown, although informal, this method of control is quite effective. (10) Colleagues are the audience for whom a professional performs, rather than primarily the client, and as Hughes has argued in his essay 'What Other', we have some very demanding 'others', particularly in the well-established professions. (11)

On the question of control by professional institutions, it has been argued in this essay that increasing bureaucratisation does not necess-

arily mean a lessening of the power of the profession in society, as long as professions are able to claim exclusive possession of their skills. Parallel with this one could argue that the status of a professional skill (a matter which is ideological as well as technical) depends on the status of the occupational organisation. This in turn depends partly on the profession's ability to control its members. Thus Gilb, Freidson and Caplow have all pointed to the paradox; the stronger the control of a professional organisation, the greater the real autonomy of its members at work, especially in bureaucracies.

Finally it could be argued that all these and other mechanisms of control by a profession over its members depend primarily on professional socialisation, and that real control is based upon self-control. The 'other' to whom Hughes refers is really an internalised other who directs behaviour. Hence the importance of professional socialisation. (12)

### 3. PROFESSIONAL SOCIALISATION

The model of socialisation described here is the one used by Hughes and his disciples in which the answer to the question 'who am I?' is given through the values of the group to which the individual aspires. By identifying with and eventually internalising these values, the individual becomes more truly aware of who he is and his place in society.

In criticising an over-emphasis on this approach, Olesen, for example, has shown that recruits come presocialised and that those whose presocialisation prepared them for the profession's values do best; in her study upper middle class girls were the best nursing students. (13)

One can therefore ask whether professional socialisation is as deep as Hughes is suggesting. He describes professional identity as something very personal, almost sacred. Certainly it is the opposite of instrumentalism, as the concept is used by Goldthorpe and Lockwood in their studies of the affluent worker. (14) It may be, however, that there is an instru-

mental aspect to professional identity. It seems odd to talk of identity and instrumentality in the same breath - how can something as sacred as identity be instrumental? Yet we are talking here not of identity but of professional identity, a product of secondary socialisation, a sub-world rather than a whole universe of meaning. Again, a recruit may be quite calculative in seeking this professional identity which he sees in instrumental terms as a means to an end, to enter a well-paid profession.

Two comments can be made here. Firstly, Hughes is providing a model rather than an absolute truth, a model which has served well in studies of professional socialisation where researchers are investigating changes in personality and the development of a professional culture. Secondly, Hughes' model can be adapted to deal with what is perhaps the real position in professional socialisation, that is it is probably a re-affirmation or extension of values which the recruit already holds.

Following from this last point and from what has already been said on the political power of the professions, it would seem that the values the recruit holds are related to the strata of society from which he comes. It is these values that professional socialisation strengthens into a fully developed professional ideology upon which to some extent the profession's power depends. Hence, as argued here, the link between socialisation, ideology and professional power.

#### 4. PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGY

Ideology as described here protects the individual, saving him the pain of making purely personal decisions in difficult work situations. It provides the perspective which enables the individual to interpret the meaning of his actions. It is also the means by which the professional group justified and furthers group ends. It is important therefore to study the connection between the professional self and the professional institution. Drawing on Durkheim's theory of the social moral self perhaps the following model

could be put forward: (15)

During the process of socialisation the student becomes imbued with the ideology of his chosen profession so that (according to Hughes) he defines himself in terms of his chosen profession. Thus in Durkheim's terms his self is both personal and social. (This may help to explain why Berger sees in work ideologies something of the sacred, a means by which a professional person gives meaning to his life). (16) Again, using Durkheim's views on religion, it could be argued that awe inspires ritual and mysticism, a respect for tradition which seems to be the chief characteristic of professional ideology. The ritual is used as a yardstick by colleagues to measure performance. (17) Has he gone through the correct procedures? this, according to Friedson, is what doctors would ask of a colleague. The mystery surrounding professional expertise keeps intruders out and binds together those inside. (18)

The mystery of professionalism often stresses that you cannot learn professional expertise from books; practical experience is vital, and this also accounts for the importance of the articulated pupil system, a relic of nineteenth century professionalisation which flourishes still today in one form or another. (19)

Thus it would seem that although much of the work of the professions is of a routine nature, they are at pains to stress its non-routine, abstruse and complex aspects, a thesis which Freidson in particular strongly argues.

Berger has commented that what goes on under the heading of professionalisation in many ways is not far away from a pathetic confidence trick (and here it may be added that the trick is one that the individual professional plays on himself). (20) Berger goes on to say that occupations that have become obsolete have to defend their position; emergent professions have to proclaim their status. Thus the occupational scene is filled with a multitude of defence organisations and propaganda agencies and their main

weapon is professional ideology.

Respect for tradition, which arguably is another aspect of professional ideology, implies looking back to a revered past, something which of course a well-established profession can do more easily. But if a profession has no tradition, it may have to be invented. Reader, in tracing the rise of the professions in the nineteenth century, says that a professional man's understanding of social status was to get as near as he could to the pattern set by the landed gentry, or what he imagined that pattern to be, thus emulating a class whose values were anti-commercial. The land is associated with tradition and status, and it is not surprising that the emerging professions should seek to emulate the values held by the landed gentry.

Halmos says that many studies in the sociology of the professions are too cynical and perhaps this particular study could be so criticised. (21) On the other hand, might it not be that a function of ideology is to convince the individual that what he is doing is right and that a sincere man is the man who has most fully convinced himself, has most completely accepted his profession's ideology. In the example of professional ideologies in cancer research, it is as if cancer was a completely different disease for each of the professions concerned. They defined it differently according to their professional ideologies, and by their definition claimed for their respective professions the leading part in seeking a cure. (22) However, this study also shows the sincerity of the professionals concerned - and who is to say where ideology and 'true knowledge' (assuming there is such a thing) meet, or where one ideology is 'better' than another? Perhaps one should concentrate first on how professional ideologies arise and how they link the individual to his profession.

It has been argued that professional ideology is the link that binds the individual to his profession and also enables the profession to define itself in society. It thus combines the micro and macro aspects of profess-



ionalism. The micro aspect arises perhaps through the routinisation of knowledge in which knowledge is adapted, if possible, to the needs of the profession, in which for example the profession tries to define wants rather than the client (as Freidson has argued). An example of this is the Freudian breakthrough in psychology. It could be argued that psychoanalysis has become a profession like any other and that in the process of routinisation this one-time revolutionary knowledge has become transformed into an ideology, something static which practitioners (whose livelihood depends on the uninstitutionalised body of knowledge) will steadfastly defend. (23) It is an ideology because all practitioners must accept it, they identify with it and are committed to it, and new knowledge is explained by reference to this ideology.

In terms of the sociology of knowledge, in becoming routinised during the process of professionalisation, knowledge becomes organised and it becomes the exclusive knowledge of the particular profession. It becomes the ideology upon which that profession's political power is based, as Freidson says - 'knowledge itself does not give special power; only exclusive knowledge gives power to its possessors. And it is precisely in the occupational principle of organisation by which recruitment, training and the performance of the work of creating, disseminating and applying knowledge are controlled by the 'knowledge occupation' that such power is obtained. (24)

Freidson then says that claims to knowledge function as ideology, they become imperialistic, and the competition among professions is based partly on conflicting definitions of knowledge, as the example on cancer research quoted here has indicated.

If through its ideology a profession is able to present its expertise as important to society, then its power will be that much increased. Thus ideology can be seen as linking the topics in this essay, professional power in society, professional control over members and socialisation.

## CONCLUSIONS

Many attempts have been made to examine the nature of the professions. Durkheim's collected lectures on the subject of the professions was to a large extent an exposition of how they ought to function in industrial society and could be seen as a logical extension of 'The Division of Labour in Society'. (25) Similarly, the work by Carr Saunders and Wilson seem to a large extent to be idealistic, describing what the professions ought to be. (26) Many commentators continue in this way, the most recent being Paul Halmos, whose plea that we should see the professions as an important part of the personal service society and not to be too cynical, a plea no doubt aimed at writers like Elliott Freidson, could also be seen as part of a normative sociology of the professions. (27), (28).

The aim of this essay has been simple; to demonstrate the nature of the professions in an industrial society by showing first what they are actually doing and to find the meaning of what they are doing. How do professions exercise power, why do they do it this way, what do they hope to achieve, what weapons do they use, and so on. Thus it will be seen that professions exercise their political power largely as pressure groups, since they are not interested in political power as such. The means they use are their ability to talk to top civil servants, their institutional strength and the acceptance of their professional ideology in society. Each of these means of maintaining power and influence can be analysed in turn by examining such questions as to what extent are professions part of a ruling elite, how do they maintain internal power over the membership, and what is the professional ideology, how did it develop and why it exerts influence in society. Hence by examining the manifestation of professional power in its various aspects, one gains insights into the nature of the professions and their place in society.

The conclusions of this essay may be summarised as follows:

#### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. Professions do not seek political power as such but seek to influence governments in areas of corporate concern, such as the protection of members' work, their independence and the status of professional expertise generally.
2. Professions, in exerting power, could be viewed as parts of a plurality of competing interest groups. However, it is suggested that the higher professions are part of a ruling elite sharing similar ideologies.
3. The importance of client control should not be overstressed. Indeed, it would seem that it is the professions who largely control their clients by their ability to define the nature of the professional services they offer. Furthermore, it would seem that professionals 'perform' for an audience of fellow professionals rather than for clients.
4. Increasingly, professionals are becoming employees in bureaucracies, but this does not necessarily imply a diminution of professionalism, since professions are able, by the means described here, to maintain the status and authority of their expertise. These means include the socialisation of members, and the evolving and maintaining of professional ideologies.
5. Professions mobilise their power through their control over their own members. Most professions grew in the nineteenth century from a loose-knit association of gentlemen of similar status to the formal organisations of today, with rational bureaucratic criteria for entry including the development of examination systems.

6. An important aspect of internal control in a profession is control by the elite. It would seem that despite changes in the status of the members and particularly of recruits, the Church of England as a professional body is still largely controlled by the values of the episcopate.
7. One should not overemphasise the importance of a profession's own bureaucratic control system. Professions generally are self-regulating, and this is achieved largely through informal peer group control.
8. It appears that the success of peer group control arises largely from the fact that the socialisation of members has been similar, through which the individual commits himself to his chosen profession.
9. Taking socialisation to be a key element in the internal control of professions, it would appear that correct socialisation is achieved partly by the willingness of recruits to identify with the profession, including its ideology, and that they tend to define themselves in terms of their chosen profession.
10. The recruit becomes committed to his chosen career largely as a result of his investment in it and occupational choice could to some extent be said to have taken place after he has begun professional training. In considering the importance of professional socialisation, Becker's development of the concepts of career, commitment, investment, identification and student culture are useful analytical tools, but one should stress also the importance of anticipatory socialisation. Moreover, some professional

socialisation is not very deep at all, hence the distinction between role socialisation and status socialisation.

11. Correct socialisation ensures acceptance of the professional ideology which gives the group its internal cohesiveness.
12. Every profession seems to develop an ideology about its work and its place in society, and will tend to exaggerate the importance of its expertise, so much so that the expertise itself becomes to some extent a matter of faith and belief for both practitioner and client, rather than a purely technical thing. New professions have to develop new ideologies in order to erect and maintain the boundaries for their work.
13. The power and prestige of a profession depends largely on the extent to which its expertise and ideology are accepted by society, hence the connection between professional ideology and professional power.
14. Looking at the professions in a societal context, one should be wary of seeing them purely in class terms. To a large extent the use of professional power is concerned with infighting and boundary maintenance.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER II

#### THE POWER OF THE PROFESSIONS IN SOCIETY

1. Reader, W.J. 'Professional Men' - p 73
2. Elliott, P. 'The Sociology of the Professions' - p 148
3. Eckstein, H. 'Pressure Group Politics'
4. Kaye, B. 'The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain'
5. Barnett, M.J. 'The Politics of Legislation'
6. ibid, pp 131, 132
7. ibid, pp 153, 154
8. Gilb, C.L. 'Hidden Hierarchies' - p 154
9. Kaye, op. cit. - pp 19-21
10. Barnett, op. cit.
11. Eckstein, op. cit.
12. Johnson, T.J. 'Professions and Power' - p 45 ff
13. Kaye, op. cit. - pp 163, 164
14. Thompson, F.M.L. 'Chartered Surveyors' - p. 236
15. Hughes, E.C. 'The Professions in Society' - Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, Vol 26, No. 1, February 1960  
reprinted in Hughes, E.C. 'The Sociological Eye' pp 360-363
16. Carlin, J. 'Lawyers on their Own'
17. Smigel, O. 'The Wall Street Lawyer'
18. Hughes, E.C., op. cit. pp 372-373

19. Hughes, E.C. 'What Other' in A. Rose (Ed) 'Human Behaviour and Social Processes'
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24. Kornhauser, W. 'Scientists in Industry, Conflict and Accommodation'
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26. Tunstall, J. 'Journalists at Work'.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PROFESSIONS' POWER OVER ITS OWN MEMBERS I

1. Gilb, C.L. 'Hidden Hierarchies'
2. ibid, pp 71, 72
3. Hall, O. 'Types of Medical Career' - American Journal of Sociology, Vol 55, November 1949 - pp 243 - 253
4. Kaye, B. 'The Development of the Architectural Profession in Britain' - p 125
5. Smigel, O. 'The Wall Street Lawyer'
6. Thompson, K. 'Church of England Bishops as an Elite' in Stanworth, P. and Giddens, A. (Eds) 'Elites and Power in British Society'.
7. ibid, p 207

8. Gilb, op. cit., pp 69-70
9. Caplow, T. 'The Sociology of Work' - pp 120-121
10. The idea of a professional performing for an audience of fellow professionals is discussed in the essay by Hughes, E.C. in 'What Other' in Rose, A. (Ed) 'Human Behaviour and Social Processes'
11. Freidson, E. 'The Medical Profession' and 'Professional Dominance'
12. Freidson, E. and Rhea, B. 'Processes of Control in a Company of Equals' - Social Problems, Vol II, 1963
13. ibid, p 122
14. ibid, p 125

#### CHAPTER IV

##### THE PROFESSION'S POWER OVER ITS OWN MEMBERS II

1. Becker, H.S. and Carper, J.W. 'The Development of Identification with an Occupation' - American Journal of Sociology, Vol LXI, January 1956- pp 289 - 298
2. Hughes, E.C. 'What Other' in Rose, A. (Ed) 'Human Behaviour and Social Processes' p 124
3. Reader, W.J. 'Professional Men' - p 118
4. Becker, H.S. and Carper, J.W. 'Elements of Identification with a Profession' - American Sociological Review, Vol 21, No. 3, June 1956 - pp 341-348
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23. Dornbush, S.M. 'The Military Academy as an Assimilating Institution' - Social Forces, Vol XXXIII, 1955
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## CHAPTER V

### PROFESSIONAL IDEOLOGIES

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8. ibid, p 377
9. Pettigrew, A.M. 'Occupational Specialization as an Emergent Process' Sociological Review, Vol 21, No. 2, May 1973 - pp 255-278
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12. Freidson, E. 'Professional Dominance' - p 99
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15. Freidson, op cit, pp 136-137
16. ibid, p 152
17. ibid, pp 153-4
18. Berger, P. 'The Human Shape of Work'
19. Waddington, op. cit.
20. Pettigrew, op. cit.
21. Freidson, E. and Rhea, B. 'Processes of Control in a Company of Equals' - Social Problems, Vol II, 1963

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PLACE OF THE PROFESSIONS IN SOCIETY

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2. Mills, C. Wright 'White Collar'
3. Oppenheimer, M. 'The Proletarianization of the Professional' in Halmos, P. (Ed) 'Professionalisation and Social Change' - The Sociological Review, Monograph 20, 1973
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24. Freidson, op. cit.
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